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TENT WORK IN PALESTINE.

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THE DOME OF THE ROCK.

TENT WORK IN PALESTINE

A Record of Discovery and Adventure.

BY

CLAUDE REIGNIER CONDER, R.E.,

OFFICER IN COMMAND OF THE SURVEY EXPEDITION.

Published for the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. W. WHYMPER.



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1878.

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TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE OF WALES

This Work is Dedicated,

WITH HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS' GRACIOUS PERMISSION,

BY THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

THE Survey of Western Palestine was commenced under Captain Stewart, R.E., in January, 1872. Ill-health obliged that officer to return almost immediately. Lieutenant Conder, R.E., was appointed to the command, and arrived in Palestine in the summer of the same year. The work meantime had been conducted under the charge of the late Mr. C. F. Tyrwhitt Drake.

Lieutenant Conder returned to England in September, 1875, having surveyed 4700 square miles. He brought with him a mass of notes, special surveys, observations, and drawings, in the arrangement of which he has been principally occupied from that time to the present.

The remaining 1300 square miles of the Survey were finished by Lieutenant Kitchener last year.

The volumes which the Committee now issue contain Lieutenant Conder's personal history of his work, without specially entering on the scientific results. These will be published with the great map in the form of memoirs, twenty-six in number, one to every sheet.

Lieutenant Conder's conclusions and proposed identifications are, it will be understood, his own. The Committee do not, collectively, adopt the conclusions of any of their officers.

W. HEPWORTH DIXON,
Chairman of the Executive Committee.

PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND OFFICES,
11 & 12, CHARING CROSS, *May*, 1878.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE Trigonometrical Survey of Western Palestine is now an accomplished fact. The whole of the material collected is safely stored in the Working Office of the Palestine Exploration Fund, and it is hoped that in the course of the year 1878 it will be ready for publication.

It is not an easy task which has thus been successfully accomplished; the difficulties of the Survey party have been many, and, more than once, events seemed to threaten the entire interruption of the work. But the time was unusually favourable in many respects, for the land was quiet and comparatively prosperous, the Bedawîn were in subjection to the Turkish Government, and the price of provisions and of animals was, at first, remarkably low.

The Survey was actually commenced at the end

of the year 1871. Preliminary *reconnaissances* of parts of Palestine had been previously made by Captain Anderson, R.E., and Captain Warren, R.E., and the Ordnance Survey of the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, with the line of levels from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea, and from Jerusalem to Solomon's Pools, had been executed by Major Wilson, R.E.

It was by the advice of these experienced explorers that the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund undertook the Survey of Western Palestine, to the scale of one inch to the mile, the object being the complete examination of the whole country, with an amount of accuracy equal to that of Ordnance work.

The officer to whom this great work was entrusted was Captain Stewart, R.E., and his staff consisted of Sergeant Black and Corporal Armstrong, R.E.; Mr. C. F. Tyrwhitt Drake was also appointed as linguist and archæologist to the expedition.

The work met with a most serious check at its commencement. Captain Stewart, arriving in the most unhealthy time of the year, and engaged in the most unhealthy part of the country, while measuring the base line, was struck down with

fever and invalided home. The Committee then honoured me with the offer of the command, as his successor, and I was instructed to proceed as soon as possible to Palestine.

In the meantime the little party, under the care of Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake, pursued its labours, and carried the Survey up the country to Jerusalem, and thence to Nablus, accomplishing in the first half of 1872 about 500 square miles. This work has since, under my direction, been re-examined, and the excellent character of this part of the map reflects the highest credit on the zeal and care of the two surveyors, who, though ignorant of the language and unaccustomed to the style of work required, yet succeeded in recovering everything of value in the district; nor does it less reflect credit on the tact and judgment of my lamented friend Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake, on whom devolved the arduous task of organising and managing the infant expedition.

I reached Palestine on the 8th of July, 1872, and from that date, until the 1st October, 1875, the work was pushed on with scarcely any interruption, except during my absence for four months in 1874, when I returned to England to recruit my health, which was seriously impaired

by the hardships encountered in the Jordan Valley.

After the attack on the party at Safed in 1875, an account of which will be found in the second volume, the work was suspended for a year. When I left Palestine four-fifths of the Survey was completed; the remaining fifth has been happily carried out during the year 1877 under the command of Lieutenant Kitchener, and the great map now extends over 6000 square miles, from Dan to Beersheba, and from Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea.

The Survey is being prepared in twenty-six sheets. The plan will show towns, villages, ruins, roads, water-courses, and buildings, tombs, caves, cisterns, wells, springs, and rock-cut wine-presses. The hills will also be delineated, and the cultivation shown, olives, figs, vines, and palms being distinguished; and the wild growth, oak-trees, scrub, and principal separate trees will appear. The Roman milestones on the roads are marked, and every similar relic of antiquity; the heights of the various principal features are given, and the levels of the Sea of Galilee and Dead Sea have been fixed to within a foot.

Palestine is thus brought home to England,

and the student may travel, in his study, over its weary roads and rugged hills without an ache, and may ford its dangerous streams, and pass through its malarious plains without discomfort.

The map, however, is but a part of the material collected, and the map without a memoir would be a sealed book. On that memoir, under the direction of two editors, Major Wilson, R.E., and Mr. G. Grove, I have now been employed for nearly two years, and may hope in another six months to have completed the work.

There are in all some 9000 Arabic names on the map which, without translation, must prove a stumbling-block to the student; the first and most important want was therefore a series of indexes giving the Arabic words, their meanings when descriptive (and this applies to about nine-tenths of the whole number), their relation, when ancient, to the Hebrew, and their origin when modern. Thus, out of the mass of names collected, those of real value may easily be selected; and the danger of fixing on some modern title of little importance, as representing some old Scriptural site, is avoided. This translation I have endeavoured, as far as I was able, to carry out,

and have submitted it to persons conversant with the peculiar peasant dialect of Palestine. Their opinion on its merits is, I am glad to say, satisfactory, as is also the professional opinion of the Ordnance Survey authorities on the character of our triangulation and on the technical details of the Survey.

In addition to these names indexed in English, in Arabic, and, where necessary, in Hebrew, the memoir will contain three other sections; first, the Topographical description of the country, the Orography and Hydrography, and the full account of the villages and towns, of their principal buildings, the cultivation round them, and as far as possible their population and ancient history; every inhabited place in Palestine will be so described. In the second section, the large mass of Archæological notes collected will be given. Every ruin marked on the Survey sheets will receive a notice, and full descriptions will be given of all the important places, with minute details of the mortar, masonry, and architectural features, and a collection of plans and surveys to a larger scale, including, for instance, the surveys of Ascalon, Cæsarea, Masada, Samaria, Beisân, and other important towns, with the plans of all the

Crusading churches and fortresses, of Byzantine monasteries, and ancient synagogues and tombs. From this mass of information, arranged and compared, I have been able to deduce many valuable results, which tend to throw light on the date of those buildings, throughout Palestine, the origin of which was before doubtful, and I have collected indications to assist in the classification of newly-discovered buildings as either Jewish, Roman, Byzantine, Gothic, or Saracenic.

The last section of the memoir gives information as to the population, with all the traditions collected which refer to special places. In addition to this, a general geological account of Palestine will be added, with all the observations made regarding the formation of the Jordan Valley.

This work has been carried out by a party never stronger than five in number as regards Europeans, and will have been completed in little over five years. The account given of the country will, I hope, be more complete than anything of the kind yet attempted for any Eastern land. The memoir will contain information which I have at various times carefully abstracted, from more than fifty standard works, including Egyptian, Samaritan, and Talmudic writings, the early Christian Itine-

raries, and the mediæval chronicles, besides the Bible narrative, and the works of Josephus and other classical authorities.

It is evident that so great a work requires some general *résumé*, to bring it within the reach of the general public, who might not read the memoir, or would fail to obtain from it any very vivid idea of Palestine, or of the discoveries made there during the work of the Survey Party.

The Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund have, therefore, further honoured me with the commission to write the following account of the work carried out under their orders, and of the results which seem to be of most general interest. The book is intended to give as accurate a general description as possible of Palestine. It is not, of course, to be supposed that the Committee necessarily hold themselves responsible for the personal views expressed with regard to points of controversy mentioned in these pages; those views are put forward on my own account, and the public will best be able to judge how far they are worthy of being endorsed. My aim has, however, been to steer clear, as far as possible, of doubtful questions, and to confine myself to the newly-acquired facts, which in many cases

have dissipated the difficulties due to imperfect information.

The main object of the Survey of Palestine may be said to have been to collect materials in illustration of the Bible. Few stronger confirmations of the historic and authentic character of the Sacred Volume can be imagined than that furnished by a comparison of the Land and the Book, which shows clearly that they tally in every respect. Mistaken ideas and preconceived notions may be corrected; but the truth of the Bible is certainly established, on a firm basis, by the criticisms of those who, familiar with the people and the country, are able to read it, not as a dead record of a former world or of an extinct race, but as a living picture of manners and of a land, which can still be studied by any who will devote themselves to the task.

The study is threefold. It includes the minute investigation of the detailed topography of the Bible. Former explorers have done much in this respect; but it may be claimed for the Survey that the new discoveries are almost as numerous as all those of former travellers put together. For confirmation, I would ask the reader to turn to the Appendix giving the list of Bible places

now identified, and to observe the proportion newly discovered.

The second branch is that of archæology. The Survey includes a complete examination of the ancient condition of the country. The old cultivation is traced by the wine-presses, olive-presses, ruined terraces, and rude garden watch-towers. The ancient sites are recognised by their tombs, cisterns, and rocky scarps. Thus we are entitled to draw conclusions as to the ancient cultivation, climate, and water supply of Palestine, in Bible times.

The third branch is the study of the people. To this I offer a contribution in the chapters devoted to the peasantry and to other inhabitants of Palestine. I trust they may serve to show how rich a field of inquiry is opened to the student among the ancient indigenous population of the Holy Land.

In concluding these remarks, I would say a few words on the subject of identification. What is an identification? It is the recovery of an ancient historic site, still known to the natives under its original name, or a modification of that name, though lost sight of by Europeans. It is evident that the requisites for a satisfactory identification

are—first, the suitability of the position to all the known accounts of the place; second, the preservation of all the radical parts of the name; third, in case of the loss of the name, we require definite indications—such as measured distances, or some connection with existing buildings, or relative position to known sites. The site must show traces of antiquity, and the name must be placed beyond the suspicion of being of recent or spurious origin; the correspondence of the modern and ancient titles must, also, not be merely apparent, but must be radically exact. Failing these requirements, no identification will stand the criticism which is now brought to bear on newly-proposed discoveries.

A second question is intimately connected with this subject—namely, the authority of Christian tradition. We should not underrate this valuable means of tracing ancient and sacred sites, which has, we may hope, handed down to us the positions of such holy places as the Grotto of Bethlehem and Jacob's well at Shechem; nor lay aside tradition because it *is* tradition, disregarding one of the few ways of settling the locality of places which were quite as sacred in the fourth century as they are now.

On the other hand, a careful and minute inspection of the fourth-century writings cannot but lead to one conclusion: that Christian tradition can be taken only as an indication, not as an authority. Unsupported by other evidence, the tradition is not, in itself, sufficient to fix any site as authentic; yet most valuable hints may often be obtained by a study of these early descriptions of the land.

We may take as an example the famous Onomasticon of Eusebius and Jerome. We are now able to point out, on the map, almost every place mentioned in the Onomasticon, the position of which is clearly defined by measurement, or by reference to neighbouring places; for in almost every case the name still exists, and these places number about 200 in all.

There is thus no question that the land was thoroughly well known to Jerome and Eusebius; but when we turn from their facts to their theories, we find that the confusion is hopeless; the places proposed as identical with those noticed in the Bible are quite as often impossibly guessed as correctly fixed. In fact, the early fathers too often jumped at conclusions, and, in the fourth century, there were no critics to contradict them.

This conclusion may be supported by any number of instances. In the cases of Shiloh and Bethhoron, the sites mentioned are those now accepted. In those of Nob and Ajalon, Jerome's identifications are not in any way capable of being reconciled with the Scripture narrative. Thus it is only as regards personal acquaintance with ancient Palestine fifteen centuries ago, that the Onomasticon has any real value.

The observations which apply to this work—the earliest and ablest of the Christian descriptions of Palestine—apply with equal force to all succeeding accounts; and few writers would attempt to justify the wild theories of the mediæval chroniclers, whose identifications, in many cases, contradict alike the Biblical accounts, and the views of the earlier Byzantine pilgrims.

Christian tradition with regard to sacred places can only, with a single exception, be traced back to the fourth century—that exception is the Grotto of Bethlehem. But Christian sites appear often to be fixed by Jewish tradition; and when such is the case, their reliability is evidently increased, their history being carried back to an earlier source. This latter really reliable class of traditions is dis-

tinguished by the fact that the Jewish or Samaritan, and generally the Moslem, traditions point to the same spots venerated by the Christians. The sites of the Temple, and of Jacob's well, with Joseph's tomb, the sepulchres of the Patriarchs, and of Joshua, Phinehas, and Eleazar, are pointed out at the same spots by Jew, Christian, and Moslem; and there is every reason to suppose these to be authentic traditions.

It is, therefore, by *consent of evidence* that the true and indigenous origin of a tradition may be tested. Where this consent does not exist, it is to the Jewish and indigenous, rather than to the later Christian tradition, that we should turn, as the latter must evidently be in such cases of foreign origin.

This distinction will be carefully observed in the following pages; and, by pointing out the cases in which there is a general consent of the Jewish, Moslem, and Christian traditions, it is hoped that everything of real value preserved by tradition will be thus selected.

C. R. C.

Christmas, 1877.

TENT WORK IN PALESTINE.

CHAPTER I.

THE ROAD TO JERUSALEM.

THE morning of Monday the 8th of July, 1872, brought us in sight of the coast of Palestine, near Jaffa. The town rose from the shore on a brown hillock; the dark, flat-roofed houses climbing the hill one above another, but no prominent building breaking the sky outline. The yellow gleaming beach, with its low cliffs and sand-dunes, stretched away north and south, and in the distance the dim blue Judean hills were visible in shadow.

Jaffa is called the Port of Jerusalem, but has no proper harbour at present. In ancient times the "Moon Pool," south of the town, now silted up, was perhaps the landing-place for Hiram's rafts of cedar-wood; but the traveller passes through a narrow opening in a dangerous reef

running parallel with the shore, or, if the weather is bad, he is obliged to make a long detour round the northern end of the same reef. By ten in the morning the land breeze rises, and a considerable swell is therefore always to be expected. The entrance through the reef is only sufficient for one boat, and thus every year boats are wrecked on the rocks and lives lost. It is said also that each year at least one person is killed by the sharks close to land.

The little Russian steamer was anchored about two miles from shore, and rolled considerably. The decks were crowded with a motley assemblage, specimens of every Levantine nationality. Each deck passenger had his bedding with him, and the general effect was that of a huge rag-heap, with human faces—black, brown, and white—legs, arms, and umbrellas, sticking out of the rags in unexpected places. Apart from the rest sat a group of swarthy Bedawin, with their huge head-shawls, not unlike a coal-scuttle bonnet in effect, bound with a white cord round the brow. They wore their best dresses, the black hair cloak, with red slippers. The rugged dark faces with white beards and sun-scorched eyes wore a curious mixed expression of assumed dignity and badly-concealed curiosity concerning the wonders of civilisation surrounding them.

The colouring of these various groups would have been a treat to an artist. The dull rich

tints were lit up here and there by patches of red leather and yellow silk. Like all oriental colour, it was saved from any gaudiness of effect by the large masses of dull brown or indigo which predominated.

The steamer was soon besieged by a fleet of long flat boats with sturdy rowers, and into these the passengers were precipitated, and their luggage dropped in after them. The swell was so great that we were in constant danger of being capsized under the companion-ladder. As we rowed off and sank in the trough of the waves, the shore and town disappeared, and only the nearest boats were visible high up on the crest of the rollers.

The exciting moment of reaching the reef came next; the women closed their eyes, the rowers got into a regular swing, chanting a rude rhyme, and waiting for the wave we were suddenly carried past the ugly black rocks into smooth water close to the wharf. There is always a good deal of screaming on landing, but on this occasion it was worse than usual. The Quarantine officers interfered, as the passengers had not been examined, and we remained in the boat for about half an hour in hot sun, listening to the furious storm of abuse and recrimination, which suddenly came to an end for no very easily understood reason; probably from some hint of a douceur not understood by foreigners. A very dirty Nubian

now rushed at the boat, and, on his shoulders, I made my approach to the sacred soil.

The landing at Jaffa has been from time im memorial an exciting scene. We have the terrible and graphic account of the old pilgrim (Sæwulf) who, "from his sins or from the badness of the ship," was almost wrecked, and who witnessed from the shore the death of his companions, helpless in a great storm in the offing. We have the account of Richard Lion-Heart springing, fully armed, into the surf and fighting his way on shore. The little port, made by the reef, has been long the only place south of Acre where landing was possible; but the storms which have covered the beach with modern wrecks were equally fatal to the Genoese galleys and Crusading war-ships.

The town of Jaffa contains little of interest, though it is sufficiently striking to a new comer. The broad effects of light and shadow are perhaps enhanced here by the numerous arched streets and the flights of steps which climb from the sea-level to the higher part of the town. The glory of Jaffa consists in its beautiful gardens, which stretch inland about a mile and a half, and extend north and south over a length of two miles. Oranges, lemons, palms, bananas, pomegranates, and other fruits grow in thick groves surrounded by old cactus hedges having narrow lanes between them deep in sand. Sweet water is found in abundance at a moderate depth. The scent of the oranges is

said to be at times perceptible some miles from land, to approaching ships. Still more curious is the fact that the beautiful little sun-bird, peculiar to the Jordan valley, is also to be found in these gardens. How this African wanderer can have made its way across districts entirely unfitted for its abode, to spots separated by the great mountain chain, it is not easy to explain.

Outside the town on the north-east is the little German colony, the neat white houses of which were built originally by an American society which was almost exterminated by fever, and finally broken up by internal differences, caused, I understand, by some resemblance in the views of the chief to those of Brigham Young. The land and buildings were bought by the thrifty German settlers, members of the Temple Society, with the views and history of which sect I became further acquainted during the following winter.

Leaving this colony about four p.m., and passing through the gardens, we emerged on the broad brown plain of Sharon. My travelling companion, an American clergyman, was unfortunately a bad horseman, and our progress was therefore tedious. We had with us a young Arab, the son of one of the dragomans, and I was also accompanied by my faithful terrier, which was mistaken by the Jaffa street-boys, at the hotel, for a white cat. She trotted most bravely along in the sand in spite of

the heat, or lay still on the pommel in front while we cantered.

The soil of this plain is naturally of great fertility. Even the negligent tillage of the peasantry produces fine harvests. The Germans ploughed deeper, and were rewarded by a crop of thistles, which to a good farmer would have been a subject of satisfaction as proving the existence of virgin soil, only requiring to be scoured by other crops for a year or two in order to yield fine harvests of corn. At this time of year, the barley had been gathered in, and only the dry stubble was left.

Our ride was not a long one, as we only intended to reach Ramleh that night, and we arrived before sundown in sight of the town, which is first visible from a rise of ground on the road. The long olive groves here formed a dark Oasis in the treeless plain, and above them rose the beautiful tower of the "Forty," belonging to the fine old ruined building called the "White Mosque," built in the fourteenth century by the son of Kalawûn. The Forty were, according to the Moslems, companions of the Prophet; according to the later Christian tradition, forty martyrs of Cappadocia. A second mosque, now in use, exists in the middle of the town. This I was afterwards able to visit, and found it to be probably the most perfect specimen of a fine twelfth century church in Palestine, unchanged except that the beautiful western door-

way is closed, a prayer recess scooped in the southern wall, and the delicate tracery of the columns defaced by whitewash and plaster—a vandalism not peculiar to Moslem restorers.

This fine church, which we were the first to examine and plan, is probably that visited by the old English pilgrim Sir John Maundeville, dedicated according to him to the Virgin, "where Our Lord appeared to Our Lady in the likeness which betokeneth the Trinity."

Ramleh, like many another town in this ruined land, is full of contrasts of past grandeur and of present squalor and decay. The walls of fine stone houses are enclosed in wretched hovels of mud. Here and there an ornate Cufic or Arabic inscription is left, telling of Moslem conquerors and munificent Caliphs; but the bazaars are deserted, and starved dogs and helpless lepers meet the eye on every side.

Many attempts have been made to identify Ramleh with some ancient site. Thus the learned Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela regarded it as the birthplace of Samuel, while Christians have supposed it to be Arimathæa or Ramoth Lehi. But, against all such views, the testimony of historians, both Moslem and Christian, is decisive. They agree in representing it as founded by the son of the Caliph 'Abd el Melik early in the eighth century, after the destruction of Lydda. In Crusading history the town, which was then walled,

plays a conspicuous part, and, under the early successors of Saladin it rose to considerable importance; but the site, which is, as its name indicates, "sandy," is not a natural one for a great city, and the water-supply is entirely artificial, from wells and huge tanks having Cufic inscriptions on their sides. Picturesque as is the scene, especially from among the palms on the east, Ramleh is nevertheless a modern place, when compared with the high antiquity of sites near to it.

By the advice of our guide we rose, though tired and stiff, from our miserable pallets in the Russian hospice, and pursued our journey by night. This is a common practice with Syrians, the townspeople especially having a great dread of the sun. We fell, however, later into the habits of the peasantry, and I feel sure that a good sound night's sleep during the cool fits the traveller far more for hard riding, though in the heat, than the broken rest of a few hours followed by slow progress in the dark.

The road to Jerusalem was once properly made, except in the matter of drainage, but it has been allowed to fall into ruin again, and the central rib of stones sticks out from the surface, the metalling having been worn away on each side. The last left of the American colony, a man of energy and resource, once set up a coach, but during his illness it was driven by less skilful hands, the horses were lamed, and the coach itself smashed. There is

therefore now no means of travelling except on horseback, with mules to carry the luggage.

In silence we picked our way along beneath the cloudless Syrian sky, bright with stars, which shine with a lustre unknown in England. The dawn was breaking when we began to enter a bare wilderness of stony hills, and higher mountains were visible dark in the shadow beyond. In crossing Palestine at any point three districts are passed through, each of which receives a distinctive name in the Bible and in Jewish writings. First we cross the flat sea plain, in part sandy and barren, scattered with the black tents or reed cabins of the small encampments of Bedawin, a pastoral race gradually losing ground before the peasantry; in part a cultivated and very rich corn land, with wretched villages of mud perched on eminences whence the breeze is better felt. To the new comer these hamlets, most of which represent sites older than the time of Joshua, have a deserted appearance. The eye misses the contrast between roof and wall, and the glazed windows and wooden doors seen in Europe. The peasant hut in Palestine is merely four walls of mud, with a roof of boughs covered also with mud; hence the village, which consists of perhaps fifty or sixty such cabins huddled together without plan or order, and gradually climbing the slope so that the floor of one is level with the roof of another, has an uniform grey colour only broken by the whitewashed dome

of the little chapel dedicated to the patron "Prophet" or Sheikh. In the plain there are scarcely any springs, and the village is supplied as a rule by a pond of stagnant rain-water banked round freshly every year. The most conspicuous object outside is the huge rubbish-heap where refuse of every kind is thrown. Savage mangy half-starved dogs keep watch above, and annoy the stranger until boldly attacked in turn. They belong to no one, are cared for by no one, and their only food appears to be an occasional carcass of a donkey or bullock. It is said that they eat mice and beetles when nothing else is to be found. All night they vie with the jackal in their howls, and they are often really dangerous when rearing their puppies.

Upon the refuse-heap, in the shade of the wall, the village elders may be seen seated smoking in rows, whilst the blue-gowned women toil up the hill with the goat-skin water-bags bound to their heads or the red pottery jars balanced upon them, holding in their tattooed lips the corner of the white head-veil which prevents their mouths being visible.

The plain once passed, the traveller enters the district called Shephelah, or "lowlands" in the Bible, consisting of low hills, about 500 feet above the sea, of white soft limestone, with great bands of beautiful brown quartz running between the strata. The broad valleys among these

hills forming the entrances to the third district produce fine crops of corn, and on the hills the long olive groves flourish better than in either of the other districts. This part of the country is also the most thickly populated, and ancient wells, and occasionally fine springs, occur throughout. The villages are partly of stone, partly of mud; the ruins are so thickly spread over hill and valley that in some parts there are as many as three ancient sites to two square miles. All along the base of these hills, commanding the passes to the mountains, important places are to be found, such as Gath and Gezer, Emmaus and Beth Horon, and no part of the country is more rich in Bible sites or more famous in Bible history.

With dawn we came upon the entrance to the "lowland" district, and before us were some of the ancient places above noticed. South of the great road, Gezer, on the road, Latrûn, north of it Emmaus.

The recovery of the site of Gezer we owe to M. Clermont Ganneau. The position is one well suited for an important place, and Gezer was a royal city of the Canaanites. The modern name, Tell Jezer, "Mound of Gezer," represents the Hebrew exactly, the meaning being "cut off" or "isolated."

The origin of the title is at once clear, for the site is an outlier—to use a geological term—of the main line of hills, and the position commands one

of the important passes to Jerusalem. As is the case with many equally important places, there is not much to be seen at Gezer. The hill-side is terraced, and the eastern end occupied by a raised foundation, probably the ancient citadel. Tombs and wine-presses, cut in rock, abound, and there are traces of Christian buildings in a small chapel, and a tomb apparently of Christian origin.

Beneath the hill on the east there is a fine spring, which wells up in a circular ring of masonry; it is called 'Ain Yerdeh, or the "Spring of the Gatherings," and its existence is a strong argument in favour of the antiquity of the neighbouring site.

The little Mukâm, or Moslem Chapel, on the hill, commands a fine view of the plain of Sharon. On the south-west are the bare, sandy dunes of "barren" Ekron, beyond which are Makkedah, and Jamnia, famous for its school of learned doctors of the law, where the Sanhedrim sat after Bether had fallen. Due south the white cliff of Gath projects into the plain; on the north-west Ramleh stands among its olive gardens, palms, and cactus hedges, and the great tower of the "Forty" rises like a belfry above them: farther north another white minaret is seen above the Church of St. George at Lydda, and olive groves again hide the houses in their midst. Many of the towns of Dan, now mere mud hamlets, are scattered over the plain, and the view is bounded by the range of

yellow sand-dunes and the shining waters of the great sea; on the east rise the Judean mountains, the third district, which we were about to enter.

A most interesting and curious discovery was made in 1874 at Gezer. M. Ganneau was shown by the peasantry a rude inscription deeply cut in the flat surface of the natural rock. It appears to be in Hebrew, and to read "Boundary of Gezer," with other letters, which are supposed to form the Greek word Alkiou. M. Ganneau has brought forward an ingenious theory that Alkios was Governor of Gezer at the time this boundary was set, and he supports it by another inscription from a tomb on which the same name occurs. This theory might seem very risky, were it not strengthened by the discovery of a second identical inscription close to the last, containing the same letters, except that the name Alkiou is written upside down. In both it is true the letters are hard to read, being rudely formed, but they are deeply cut, and of evident antiquity, whilst it can scarcely be doubted that the inscription is the same in both cases. M. Ganneau attributes them to Maccabean times; it is curious that they should thus occur in the open country, at no definite distance from the town, and unmarked by any column or monument. Altogether they are among the many archæological puzzles of Palestine, and their origin and meaning will probably always remain questionable.

On the road itself stands the old Crusading fortress, called Castellum Emmaus, and apparently also Toron of the Knights, according to Benjamin of Tudela. From the latter name (a French word, meaning a hill) the present name, Latrûn, seems derived; by a process common enough in the Fellâh dialect, el Atrûn has taken the place of el Turûn, as Ajfât is the common pronunciation of Jefât, or Ajdûr of Jedûr. In the sixteenth century, however, a curious explanation of the name is given. It is called the Castle "Boni Latronis" of the good or repentant thief Dismas, but this is quite a late explanation. In the earlier chronicles of the twelfth century Latrûn is called the town of the Maccabees, and in the fourteenth their sepulchral monuments were shown there; but this notion cannot be traced back in earlier chronicles, and there is nothing at Latrûn which seems older than Crusading times.

The third site north of the road is one of even greater interest. The rude village of 'Amwâs preserves the name of Emmaus, famous in Maccabean history. The early Christians recognised this place as being also the Emmaus of the New Testament to which the two disciples walked upon the Resurrection Day. This view continued to be held till the fifteenth century, when it was observed that the distance given in the present text of the Gospel is "sixty furlongs," whereas the present site is just 160 from Jerusalem. This is

generally held to be fatal to the tradition, but the Sinaitic Manuscript, as usual, throws new light on the question. This venerable fourth century text must be held to be an important authority, because the oldest yet discovered, and in the Sinaitic Emmaus is said to be 160 furlongs from Jerusalem. There seems, therefore, no reason to suppose a second and unknown place, when the distance brings us to the famous site of Emmaus Nicopolis.

The neighbourhood of Emmaus was the scene of the second great Maccabean struggle. Judas had already overthrown the army advancing on Jerusalem by the northern pass, the famous Beth Horon battle-field. A second, yet more formidable army was encamped at the mouth of the western approach to the Holy City, and so certain were its leaders of victory, that merchants accompanied the camp with money to give for Jewish slaves, and fetters to put on their limbs when sold. The battle of Emmaus was the Maccabean Austerlitz. The little band of devotees came down by night from the ancient praying-place at Mizpeh, and whilst the main part of the Greek host was enticed into the hills, the Jews advanced northwards on the camp, and took it, cutting off the retreat of the heathen. Never again in the history of this struggle did any Greek general attempt to attack Jerusalem from the western pass.

There are still ruins of the little chapel in

Emmaus, which the early Christians built on the supposed spot where the Lord was recognised in breaking bread. Near to it also was a spring, supposed to have healing virtues. This tradition is no doubt older than Christian times, though the Christians added to it the assumption that its power was due to the touch of Christ, for the name Emmaus itself means a "healing bath," as Josephus informs us, speaking of the Galilean place of the same name. At the present day a well is shown by the peasantry, called "Well of the Plague," and it is said that a great plague originated from the spot. It is not perhaps impossible that, by a curious perversion, the tradition of the healing waters which might cure the plague has been converted into the modern idea of a plague-stricken well.

Leaving the mud hovels of Latrûn huddled amidst the ancient ruins, we proceeded to the mouth of the pass, which is called the "Gate of the Valley." On the way we were promised a coffee-shop, and naturally looked forward to a cool building, with shady court, perhaps a fountain in the midst, and fruit trees around, such as one sees depicted in views of Eastern life. Instead of so inviting a retreat, we perceived a low circle of stones, rudely thatched with dry boughs. A remarkably dirty and aged peasant was roasting black coffee within, in an iron spoon. The place was unshaded by tree or rock. A well of dirty

water was close by the hut, and the dust and heat of the white road and white hills were anything but pleasant to the weary traveller. The fatigue of journeying was becoming greater, and my companion especially suffered. We pushed on into the pass, and leaving the Shephelah district, advanced into the third—the mountain country.

In the conformation of the Judean hills the secret of the immense vitality of the Jewish nationality is probably to be found. Had the capital of Judea been placed at Cæsarea, on the high-road from Greece to Egypt—had it even been permanently fixed at Shechem, accessible through the open valley of Samaria, it cannot be doubted that Greek or Egyptian influence would have affected far more the manners and religion of the Jews. Remote and inaccessible in its rugged mountains, Jerusalem was removed from the highway by which the hosts of the Pharaohs advanced on Assyria. It was only accessible by one of three difficult passes, unless the whole country of Samaria were in the hands of the enemy. Hence in the mountains of Judea the national faith had a secure home. The Philistines overran the plains and even came up into the Shephelah; Egyptian and Assyrian monarchs conquered Samaria and Galilee, but a small band of undisciplined peasants was able, under the Maccabees, to hold at bay the armies of the Seleucidæ, and it required the fullest efforts of Roman energy and discipline to compass

the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus or under Hadrian. The history again repeats itself in Crusading times. The Judean hills resisted long after all other parts of the country had been lost, and Saladin held Jerusalem undisturbed while Richard overran the plains.

The same natural conformation renders the construction of a railway to Jerusalem an engineering project of no little difficulty. Within the distance of a few miles the hills rise suddenly from the level of the Shephelah towards the narrow plateau, 2500 feet above the sea, on which the city stands; the ascent is rough and steep, and the valleys very deep, with rugged stony sides, and ledges of hard grey rock thickly covered with shrubs, principally lentisks and arbutus, while here and there terraces have been artificially built up with dry stone walls for the cultivation of the olive.

Near the Gate of the Valley there is a little ruined Mukam or "station" sacred to the famous Imâm 'Aly, to whom the deeds of Samson and Joshua are commonly accredited by the peasantry. It is conspicuous from the fine group of aged terebinths which shade the little mihrab or prayer niche. Ascending thence past the ancient village of Sarîs, we reached at length the hill above the modern Kuriet el 'Anab, a place which calls for more special description.

Kuriet el 'Anab, or the "town of grapes," is generally called Kurieh only by the peasantry,

and this suggests its identity with Kirjath of Benjamin, in the territory of which tribe the village appears to lie. It was supposed in the early Christian times to be the site of Kirjath Jearim, the "town of forests," but this appears to be an unsatisfactory identification for several reasons. The place seems scarcely on the line of the boundary of Judah, as Kirjath Jearim was; it is not a hill with a "high" place, as we should gather Kirjath Jearim to have been from the account of the hill where the ark was kept; and lastly, the important part of the name bears no reference to the ancient title, derived from some mountain covered with thick wild growth which does not exist near the village.

The Crusaders fixed upon Kuriet el 'Anab as being the ancient Anathoth, their reasons being as usual very difficult to understand. They erected a magnificent church over a spring in the valley north of the village, dedicated to Saint Jeremiah of Anathoth, and this structure remains almost intact. On its walls the dim shadows of former frescoed paintings can be traced, and over these the names of pilgrims rudely scrawled like those of the modern tourists. The church is peculiar from the careless manner in which it has been constructed, the walls not being at right angles; thus the east wall is two and a half feet longer than the west, as we found in making the plan.

The village itself consists of stone houses of

better appearance than those in the plain, surrounded by beautiful vineyards, the vines trailing over the stone walls like a green cataract flowing to the valley. The place, which derives its name from these vineyards, was once the seat of the famous native family of Abu Ghôsh. The most notorious of its chiefs, a robber, who held all pilgrims to the capital in terror, was killed by the Egyptian Government, pursuing its usual policy of exterminating the great native families; since death he has been canonised, and a Mukâm erected to him near the village. At Easter the children of the place (which is often called Abu Ghôsh after the family) are to be seen seated along the road offering water in spouted bottles to the pilgrims. This charitable custom is rare in Palestine, though occasionally in use on some of the other pilgrim routes.

From Kuriet el 'Anab the road descends to the spring of Dilbeh, where a clear stream flows in winter, and a patch of real turf is found. Here we came upon a second coffee-shop, with which I became familiar later. Though no more pretentious than the former in appearance, it was found to be capable of furnishing us a boiled fowl, some bread unleavened, and a glass of raki, which considerably invigorated my failing companion. He found himself able to proceed at a hand-gallop, greatly to the discomfiture of my poor terrier, who had been thrust into his saddle-bags. Riding

behind I saw the unfortunate beast jogged up and down, bumping against the horse's flanks until at last she flew out, was tossed high into the air, and fell on her back in the dust. With great pluck she merely shook herself, and, without a single complaint, scudded away after the horse on which sat the clergyman in his shirt-sleeves and spectacles, his chimney-pot hat bound round with a puggaree, and his saddle-bags still flapping as he galloped wildly on towards the Holy City.

The next ascent brought us in sight of a very remarkable village on the right, now called Sôba. It is separated from the ridge on which the road runs by the deep and impassable valley which, for the greater part of its length, forms the northern boundary of Judah. The place struck me much at the time — a high conical hill crowned by a village surrounded by steep rocky ledges with thick growth of wild shrubs mingled with olives. I had afterwards occasion to visit it, and found it to be undoubtedly an ancient site. Not only are there traces of a Crusading fortress, but also many ancient Jewish sepulchres cut in rock. The peasantry say it was the palace of the Sultan of the Fenish, and that his daughter lived at a certain ruined convent near the road, which we saw surrounded with ancient trees—the wilderness formed from its original garden.

Since the telegraph line has been laid to Jerusalem, this tradition has been supplemented with

the detail that the Fenish had a telegraphic wire from the hill palace to that in the valley. Another favourite abode of the daughter was not far from the first coffee-shop. Again at Beit Jibrîn and at Keratîya we found a cavern, a garden, and a castle of the Fenish; and the fact that this tradition is confined to the district south of the Jerusalem road and on the edge of the hills, leads one to suspect that the Fenish were no other than the Felish or Philistines, for the peasantry almost invariably change their L's into N's in this manner.

But to return to Sôba. This fine site, standing out black against the sky, with its grand ravine and wild copses, is evidently an important spot; yet the name Sôba does not recall any Scriptural place, though not far different from the Hebrew Zuph where Saul met Samuel. In modern Arabic it means "a heap," such as the grain-heaps of the threshing-floors, a title which applies well to the shape of the hill, but probably this is a corruption of some older word. Dr. Chaplin of Jerusalem, who is perhaps the soundest antiquarian in the country, supposes it to mark the real site of Kirjath Jearim, and there are many points in favour of such a view. First of all, Kirjath Jearim is mentioned as on the boundary of Judah next to Mount Seir, which, in turn, is next to Chesalon. Chesalon is known to be the present Kesla, a village on the same ridge with Sôba, and between

them is a mountain called Saghîr, a word radically identical with Seir. Then again the thickets west of Sôba may well represent those of the ancient Mount Jearim "the hill of thickets." Geba also was a place near Kirjath Jearim, and a ruin called Jeb'a exists close to Sôba. Baalah was another name for Kirjath Jearim, and the word means "high" or "elevated," applying well to Sôba, which is a strong place. It is also not impossible that in the name Sôba we have a trace of Shobal the founder of Kirjath Jearim. These indications do not amount to proof, but seem well worthy of consideration, especially as the identification materially simplifies the account of the boundary of Judah.

Soba also was at one time honoured as the true site of Modin, with as little foundation as that on which Latrûn was fixed, and its great prominence above the deep and stony valley has attracted the attention of most students of Palestine topography.

And now at length we arrived at the top of the ascent, and spurring along under the stony knoll on which the little village of Kŭstŭl—an ancient "castellum" of the Roman conquerors—stands, we fully expected to see Jerusalem. Instead of this we saw before us a huge valley over 1000 feet deep, and beyond it a straight line of hills more lofty and barren than those before passed. We could well picture the disappointment, so graphically described by the old chronicler, of the weary

hosts of women and children who toiled footsore and thirsty in rear of the Crusading army, faintly asking, as each height was passed and a new view opened, "Is that Jerusalem?" If to us, well mounted and well fed, the journey was wearisome, what was it to the pilgrims harassed by Saracen skirmishers, and afraid to stop and bury those who fell, lest, as one writer says, a man might be found to be but digging his own grave.

A stony winding road led down to the bottom, a stony winding ascent led up on the other side. Around us were mountains of strikingly wild and barren character, with the dark iron-grey rocks tinged in parts with black and russet and capped by a softer white chalk. The long blue shadows, the large rounded outlines, the hardness and ruggedness of the slopes, combined to produce a scene of wild grandeur more striking than anything yet met except the dark thickets of the Sôba ridge.

The valley beneath was full of grey olive-groves; the course of its torrent bed is sinuous and winds gradually round west. In the hollow, south of its course, the village of 'Ain Kârim stands on an eminence, and close to it the white convent wall, with its dark cypresses, marks the traditional birthplace of John the Baptist.

The valley is a place famous in Jewish history. It commences north of Jerusalem and leads down past Lifta (Nephtoah) to a little village called

Kolônia which was on the road beneath us. Thence by 'Ain Kârim southwards to join the Bether valley, and by Kesla it runs down to Zoreah and Eshtaol and widens out into the great corn valley of Sorek, and so past Ekron and Jamnia to the sea. Thus it was one of those passes by which the Philistines were able to penetrate into the heart of the Jewish mountains. It was down this valley that Samuel drove the defeated host from Mizpeh, north of Jerusalem, to Ebenezer, a place probably at the entrance of the hills. In their flight they passed under Bethcar, which is not improbably the present 'Ain Kârim. Along the stony bed of this great valley at our feet, we may picture to ourselves the nomadic hosts with their mail-clad champions flying before the followers of the prophet, while far away on the white hills the tabernacle would be seen high on the ridge of Mizpeh.

The valley was also once the scene of more peaceful events in the yearly festival of "tabernacles." Kolônia has near it a ruin called Beit Mizzeh, the ancient Motza or "Spring-head," a town of Benjamin. The Talmudic doctors tell us that Motza was a *colonia* or place free from taxes, whence the origin of the modern name, and beside the banks of the stream from the spring-head grew, and still grow, the willows used at the feast. By the restaurant and the ruins of a small monastery, the stream flows under a little bridge; and round

its course shady orange gardens and olive-yards, beneath the village perched on the hillside, often tempt the inhabitants of Jerusalem to come out for an afternoon siesta. It would seem also that on the Day of Atonement this place used to be the scene of a festival so peculiar and so unlike any other part of Jewish custom that we are tempted to believe that it was an innovation of the later Hellenising faction. The daughters of Jerusalem were encouraged to come out to meet the youths who were celebrating the newly-acquired purification from sin, with palms in their hands and songs and dances. Twice a year this festival of maidens took place, and the contrast to the stern precepts of the Talmudic doctors, who discountenanced any gaiety in which women took part, forbade a student to speak to or look at any woman but his wife, and even counselled that the less he talked to her the better, is certainly suggestive of foreign origin for the feast of Motza.

Passing by this little oasis in the hills, which has thus from time immemorial been the site of festal excursions from the capital, we began the long ascent which led, not, as we hoped, to Jerusalem, but to the edge of the plateau on the opposite side of which the city stands. The road, afterwards so familiar to me, seemed longer when the distance was unknown than when every way-mark was recognised as showing nearer approach to the end of the journey; and we did not halt to admire, as

I often did afterwards, the fine view from the brow of the hill.

From that brow the great valley is seen winding southwards, and the high rounded ascent to Kŭstŭl bars out the view of the plain. Northwards the conical point of Neby Samwîl, crowned with its minaret, is a conspicuous object, and in the evening when the long shadows steal up the rugged hillsides, and the western slopes are ruddy in the setting sun, the breadth and grandeur of the colouring of the wild shapeless mountains is extremely striking, and grows upon one every time the scene opens before one's eyes.

The first approach to Jerusalem from the west is decidedly disappointing. On the east, north, and south, the aged walls, the mosque, and Holy Sepulchre, come into view at some distance, and the scene is striking; but from the west the city is approached within less than a quarter of a mile before it is seen. The first object is the huge Russian cathedral outside the town, built in 1867. The white walls and heavy leaden roofs in the Neobyzantine style block out ancient Jerusalem. Standing on the approximate site of the old tower of Psephinus, the Russian Hospice commands the whole town, and is thought by many to be in a position designedly of military strength.

When, however, these ugly modern buildings are passed, together with the many white stone villas, country residences of Europeans or rich

Jews, which form "New Jerusalem," the traveller at length comes in view of a long grey battlemented wall, a tower, the dark trees of the Armenian convent garden, and behind all the pale blue line of the Moab hills. He enters between groups of tawny, groaning camels, and black donkeys loaded with firewood, under a dark archway, and forcing a path through a noisy bright-coloured crowd of peasantry, under the shadow of the great Tower of David he alights at a German hotel within the walls of Jerusalem.



JACOB'S WELL.

CHAPTER II.

SHECHEM AND THE SAMARITANS.

THE Survey party had been left in charge of Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake for over six months since Captain Stewart had returned to England. Their progress had been rapid, and the Survey had been carried over a narrow strip from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and thence along the watershed as far north as Nablus, the ancient Shechem, thirty miles from the capital. Thus my duty lay at first in Samaria, and I only stayed a few days in Jerusalem in order to pay my

respects to our excellent consul, Mr. Noel Temple Moore, and to Dr. Chaplin, the Physician to the Jewish Mission, afterwards, as will be seen, a faithful friend of the party. I made the acquaintance of the clergyman, Mr. Neil, whose kindness to us was also afterwards very great; and of Herr Schick, the German architect, who undertook to make for me a plan, showing the depth of rubbish all over Jerusalem, which enables us now to form a fair estimate of the ancient conformation of the ground.

Only two non-commissioned officers were employed at this time, Sergeant Black and Corporal Armstrong, both picked men from the Survey companies of the Royal Engineers. On the 10th of July Sergeant Black rode from Nablus to Jerusalem and reported in the afternoon, and six days later we left for camp. The cursory visit did not allow me to gain much acquaintance with Jerusalem, and the subject may be deferred till the time when we passed a winter within the walls of the city.

About four p.m. we started along the north road, leaving on our right the valley in which lies the sacred tomb of Simon the Just, where a yearly festival is held by the Jews. The towers of Jerusalem disappeared behind the ridge of Scopus, and we cantered over the white plateau towards Beeroth. The view here is very striking, from the broken outline of the hills and from the very

red colour of the plough-land on their slopes. I afterwards saw these ranges round Neby Samwîl black against a sky of most delicate blush-rose tint, and the contrast was perhaps the finest in a land where fine effects are common at sunset. We must, however, leave undescribed for the present the hills of Benjamin, hastening on to the goal of our journey.

About sunset we began to descend into the narrow, stony gorge of the Robber's Fountain. The road is not improved by the habit of clearing the stones off the surrounding gardens into the public path. It descends through olive groves to a narrow pass with a precipice on the left, beneath which is the little spring. A ruined castle commands the pass on the Jerusalem side, and is still called "Baldwin's Tower" by the peasantry, having no doubt been built by one of the kings of that name. The gorge once passed, we emerged into an open valley, and on our left was Sinjil, named from Raymond of Saint Gilles, who there fixed his camp advancing on Jerusalem. The short twilight gave place to almost total darkness, as we began to climb the watershed which separates the plain of Moreh from the valley coming down from Shiloh, and the moon had risen when the great shoulder of Gerizim became dimly visible some ten miles away, with a silvery wreath of cloud on its summit. Creeping beneath its shadow we gained the narrow valley of Shechem, and fol-

lowed a stony lane between walnut trees under a steep hillside. The barking of dogs was now heard, and the lights in camp came into view. My poor terrier was tired and sleepy, and was set upon at once by Drake's larger bull-terriers, Jack and Jill, rather a rude reception after a thirty-mile journey.

The camp had been very well placed by Drake close to the beautiful fountain of Râs el 'Ain. Three good-sized tents, besides the kitchen tent, were arranged in a line under the olives, high above the town in a little gully, down which the cool breeze came from Gerizim. Besides our horses, mules, and dogs, we had a little tame gazelle, fed with milk from a pipe-stem, and a small jackdaw.

Next afternoon a tall man rode up the lane, accompanied by a native soldier. Dressed in tweed, with knee-boots, and the native shawl head-dress, armed and spurred, with a great beard and tanned face, Drake came in from a forty-mile ride, and we began an acquaintance destined to be remarkably intimate.

The work done from this pleasant camp, with the various sites passed on the ride from Jerusalem, will be noticed in the following chapter; the present is to be devoted to the neighbourhood of Shechem and to the Samaritan survivors living there, perhaps the most interesting city and the most interesting people in Palestine.

Shechem is the first town mentioned in the history of Abraham, the ground round Jacob's well was the first possession of Jacob in the Holy Land. Shechem is recognised in the Pentateuch as the capital of central Palestine, ranking with Hebron in the south and Kadesh in the north as a city of refuge. Later on we find Rehoboam crowned here, and indeed it is not too much to say that Shechem may be considered the natural capital of Palestine. Its central situation, its accessibility, its wonderfully fine water-supply, are advantages not enjoyed by any other city in the land. The one disadvantage which perhaps as early as the time of Rehoboam prevented its being selected as the capital, is found in its being commanded by a hill on either side so close to the town, that the old geographer, Marino Sanuto, in the fourteenth century, considers the place to be untenable by any military force, because stones might be rolled down upon the houses from either Ebal or Gerizim. It was at Shechem that the solemnities which were to be performed on the conquest of the country—the reading of the law and erection of the altar—were commanded by Moses to be performed, yet, soon after, we find the religious capital at Shiloh, and, in a few years after the great schism, the political capital of Israel was removed to Tirzah, and afterwards to Samaria.

But while the town is interesting from its an-

tiquity and from the vicissitudes of its history, the Samaritan people are yet more so.

Who are the Samaritans? What is their origin, and relation to the other natives of the country? The answer is usually a short one. They are Cuthim, strangers from beyond Jordan—settlers who replaced the Israelites led away by Sargon. It seems to me, however, that these conclusions must be received with great reserve.

Soon after my arrival we received a visit from Amram, the Samaritan high-priest, accompanied by Jacob Shellaby. The high-priest was a wonderfully handsome old man, with fine aquiline features, and he wore the crimson turban distinctive of his race. He could speak no languages except Arabic and Samaritan, and his ideas were perhaps rather limited, as he pronounced Gerizim to be the highest mountain in the world. We represented to him that Ebal was 227·7 feet higher. He allowed that it appeared to be so, but could not in reality be, because Gerizim was the highest mountain in the world. This fine old man died in 1874. It was thought that his successor was to be a mere doll in the hands of Jacob Shellaby; a gentleman who is an accomplished savant. In England he appeared for some time in the character of a Samaritan prince. He supplied travellers with many ancient Samaritan hymn books, purloined, it is said, while the congregation were reverently prostrating themselves. He described

to us with immense gusto the mode of preparing ancient manuscripts, by steeping a skin in coffee-grounds, and placing it for a month or two under the pillows of the divan. Many an unwary traveller has been taken in by false antiquities, stones, and manuscripts. It was thought that Shellaby would succeed, on the death of Amram, in obtaining the ancient roll of the law itself; but this is the Samaritan Fetish, and the young high-priest, would not connive at such a deed—which would indeed have been the killing of the golden goose, as the manuscript brings in a yearly income—and excommunicated Jacob, who, after holding an heretical passover of his own on Gerizim, finally left the congregation and repaired to Jerusalem, where I saw him in 1875.

Jacob Shellaby's ideas were perhaps not far in advance of the high-priest's. He related very naïvely his delight at the supposed discovery of a gigantic emerald, which he showed us, and which was merely a large fragment of green slag from some old glass-works. He also fully believed in the story of a cave guarded by genii, and full of gold, which might be carried away, but invariably flew back by night to its place, from wherever it might be taken.

Two things struck me very much in my intercourse with the Samaritans during this first visit, and during another stay of a few days in 1875 in Nablus.

First of all it is indisputable that both in features and in figure they bear a strikingly close family likeness to the Jews. It may be urged that the Cuthim are supposed to have been Semitic, but so are the Syrians and Bedawin, yet they are not at all like the Jews. The Samaritans are a very pure stock, the beauty of their priestly family is remarkable; the aquiline nose, the lustrous brown eyes, the thick under lip, the crisp hair, the peach-like down of the complexion, are features pre-eminently Jewish. The lean and weedy figure is again peculiar also to the Palestinian Jews, and contrasts forcibly with the obesity of the Turks and the sturdiness of the peasantry. For hundreds of years the Jews have kept their race pure, and so have the Samaritans. Since the time of Christ at least, Jews and Samaritans have probably never intermarried, yet we find them now closely alike in their characteristic physiognomy.

In the second place, the Samaritans preserve an ancient copy of the Pentateuch, which, though differing in some marked peculiarities, is yet substantially the same as the Jewish text. It is written in the Samaritan character, which closely approaches the most ancient forms of Jewish writing. It cannot be supposed that these Samaritans would have adopted the religion and sacred books of a nation that they despised and hated, and the evidence of the character employed is in favour of the original copies having been made

before the time of Ezra, when, according to the Rabbis, the square alphabet was adopted, before indeed the schism between Jew and Samaritan became so intense as it afterwards grew to be.

These facts naturally incline one *primâ facie* to consider the Samaritans as originally of the same stock with the Jews, and an investigation of the question seems to me to show that they are the last remnants of the scattered Israel, the lost Ten Tribes, whose history has always excited curiosity in the minds of so many.

It will be allowed that but little reliance can be placed on the partisan descriptions of Josephus and of the Rabbinical writers. Unfortunately we gather but little from the Bible which can throw light on the subject, and the Samaritan accounts are all very late, their oldest chronicles dating back only to the twelfth century, though apparently founded on more ancient material. It may, however, be interesting to sketch what is known of their history from various sources.

Sargon, who on his monuments is described as "Destroyer of the city of Samaria and of all Beth Omri," took away with him in 722 B.C. all the more important and a great host of minor captives, to Assyria. Still a certain proportion of the Israelites would seem to have been left behind, as we find Hezekiah sending messengers through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, inviting Israelites to the Passover, which might not be eaten by

strangers, and as some actually attended it (2 Chron. xxx. 18). Worshippers from Shechem and Samaria are also noticed as coming to Jerusalem after its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xli. 5); thus, though foreign colonists from Cutha, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim were sent into Samaria, there is reason to suppose that many of the original Israelite population were left.

The Talmudic doctors invariably call the Samaritans Cuthim. Cutha is a district as yet unknown, but it may be noticed that the Biblical account represents the men of Cutha as serving Nergal, who is known from Cuneiform inscriptions to have been a "lion-god," worshipped by inhabitants of Cutha, and therefore an appropriate deity to appease when a plague of lions was devastating the land. It is not impossible that the Jews seized upon the close similarity of the name Cuthim with the title Kûsânîya, or "true people," by which one Samaritan sect distinguished themselves from a second, the Lifânîyeh. The first sect believed in the future life, in future reward and punishment; the latter confined the promises of the law to temporal matters; the latter were named from a word meaning "to make light," because, like the pupils of the Jewish Hillel, they made the law less stringent, whereas the stronger sect, the Kûsânîya, made its burden heavier, following the example of the school of Shammai.

The foreign colonists, from Cutha, found them-

selves, as they simply supposed, unable to appease the deity of their new country without special instructions in the peculiarities of his rite. They petitioned therefore for a priest, and an Israelite priest returned and dwelt at Bethel. It is perhaps only natural to suppose that the place here intended in the Bible is Gerizim, which was held by the Samaritans to be the site of Jacob's vision. It follows from this account that at least one priestly family returned to Samaria, and the Samaritans claimed a descent for their priesthood from Phinehas the grandson of Aaron.

Another curious allegation, brought forward by Josephus and also to be found in the Targums, is that the Samaritans claimed to be Sidonians; this is however plainly contradictory to the view that they were Cuthim, and only serves to show the small reliance that can be placed on the later Jewish accounts.

Having then indications that the Israelites were not all carried to Assyria, and that one at least of their priests returned, and having the invariable assertion of the Samaritans that they are descendants of this small remnant, and in confirmation of this their physiognomical characteristics, their religion, their possession of an ancient text of the books of Moses, their observation of the Jewish Passover, according to the most ancient form of the rite, we may fairly place the Samaritan literature in the balance against the accounts

of the Pharisees—Josephus and the Talmudic doctors—which, as above shown, are in themselves contradictory.

It seems probable that the cause of the division of the Hebrew monarchy is to be sought in an original jealousy between the great tribes of Judah and Joseph who first seized on the land; but, as we have seen above, the religious schism was not complete before the time of the revival under Ezra. Worshippers from Shechem had been received at Jerusalem, and on the return of the Jews the Samaritans were anxious to take part in the restoration of the Temple in the Jewish capital. With regard to the history of the quarrel, Jewish and Samaritan accounts are, as might be expected, diametrically opposed. Josephus, in a passage which has no parallel in the Book of Ezra (Ant. xi. 4. 9.), represents ambassadors, including Zerubbabel, as going to Darius and obtaining a decree against the Samaritans, forbidding them to interfere with the building of the Temple. From the Book of Ezra it appears, however, that the enemies of Judah succeeded in stopping the work of restoration (Ezra iv. 24). The Samaritan account is in agreement with this; according to their chronicle the whole of Israel, with the exception of the Jews, wished to build the Temple on Gerizim. An appeal was made to the King, and copies of the law made by Sanballat and Zerubbabel were cast into a great fire; the former leapt out thrice

unhurt, the latter were immediately consumed. These traditions cannot of course be put in the same category with the sober history of the Book of Ezra; but in the main the accounts are not discordant, as both acknowledge an appeal to Darius and the hindrance of the Jews by Samaritan opposition.

In tracing the history of the schism, it is important to remember the great similarity of doctrine which certainly existed between the Samaritans and the Sadducees. The Jews never placed their enemies in quite the same category with the heathen. In the remarkable tract on the Cuthim, a Jew is allowed to hold intercourse with a Samaritan in all cases where it might be to his own advantage, but not when it is against his interests. The two tenets which caused the exclusion of Cuthim from the congregation are stated to have been—first, their belief in Gerizim as the true religious centre; second, their denial of the resurrection, which opinion they shared with the Sadducees.

Many details of the Samaritan faith were identical with Karaite and Sadducean tenets, and the view taken of their error appears to have been, with one Jewish party, that, while originally orthodox, they had become mixed with the priests of the high places and corrupted the purity of the faith.

It cannot be doubted that it was the Pharisees

who were the deadly enemies of the Samaritans. This sect, originating in the "separation" under Ezra, at once excluded the Samaritans from participation in the building of the Temple. Sanballat was connected by marriage with the Sadducean high priest—a fact which favours the view that he was an Israelite, not a foreigner—but against this affinity Ezra set his face, and the schism was thus rendered more complete. Gradually the Pharisees gained in power as the Sadducees declined; under the Maccabees they obtained at length the high-priesthood, and the Asmonæan Hyrcanus succeeded in destroying the Samaritan Temple in 129 B.C. With the exception of a short interval the Pharisees were in power until 35 B.C., and the constant reprisals which for four hundred years had been indulged in on both sides, had left such indelible hatred between the two nations that nothing but entire submission and the abandonment of Gerizim would have induced even the Sadducees to receive into the congregation a people whose religion in other respects was almost indistinguishable from their own.

The Samaritans are indeed in the peculiarities of their doctrine almost identical with the original Jewish party—the Karaite and Sadducean sects. They are even called Sadducees in Jewish writings, and their denial of the resurrection was, like that of the Sadducees, based on the declaration that nothing was to be found in the law of Moses on

the subject. Again, their version of the law is closely similar to that of the Septuagint, which was a translation authorised by a Sadducean high-priest from a text differing from that finally established by the Pharisees. The animosity of Josephus—who was a Pharisee, the fierce denunciations of the Talmud, written by Pharisees, the destruction of the Gerizim Temple by Hyrcanus—also a Pharisee—all combine to indicate that the Jewish hatred had nothing to do with any foreign origin of the race, but rather was roused by the religious differences of a people whom they knew to be their kith and kin.

It is often supposed that the Samaritans borrowed their religion from the Sadducees. It is surely a simpler explanation that they were a sect originally identical because originally Israelite.

The Samaritan chronicles give a simple account of the origin of their people. At the time of the return from captivity a certain number of the congregation carried into Assyria came back to Palestine under Sanballat. Some thirty thousand, however, remained behind awaiting the Prophet whom they expected as a leader. It is not impossible that of these the Nestorian Christians may be the descendants, for the Nestorians claim to be Jews of the tribe of Naphtali, and in dialect and in many of their rites they are indistinguishable from the Jews of the same country.

Sanballat, the leader of the Samaritans, is called in the Bible Sanballat the Horonite. From this title it has been supposed that he was a foreigner, though the Samaritans call him Lawîni the "Levite." The place where Israel assembled before crossing into Palestine, and where the first quarrel as to where the Temple was to be built occurred, was Horân, and this may perhaps account for the term Horonite. The Jews, under Zerubbabel, repaired to Jerusalem, the rest of the congregation, three hundred thousand in all, beside youths, women, children, and *strangers* (probably the colonists from Cutha, Hamath, and Ava), were led to Gerizim, where they established the Temple on the 9th of Tizri. Such is the Samaritan account, which gains credibility when we compare it with the Book of Ezra, and from the fact that Sanballat was connected by marriage with a Sadducean high-priest in Jerusalem. The name Lawîni or "Levite" is still preserved as the name of a prophet whose tomb is shown to the west of Shechem.

The quarrels and recriminations of Jews and Samaritans it is useless to follow in detail. The beautiful lessons of Christ were lost on both alike, and the large charity of the parable of the good Samaritan, with the truth that neither at Jerusalem nor on Gerizim was God exclusively to be sought, seem to have been far beyond the comprehension of the disputants. Even in their own

accounts the falseness and cruelty of the Samaritans are repulsively prominent; nor does the Jewish character stand high by contrast either for ingenuousness or for charity to their enemies.

By the time of our Lord the hatred of the two people had become greater than their aversion to the heathen. Wine for the Temple passing through Samaria became unfit for use, a Jew was forbidden to help a wounded Samaritan or a Samaritan woman in trouble. On the other hand, murder and treachery are charged against the Cuthim; they lighted false beacons in order to confuse the Jewish calendar depending on the appearance of the new moon, they betrayed the Jews to the Romans, they polluted the Temple with bones. Such crimes could never be forgiven, and the Jews in contempt cast them out as heathen and foreigners.

The later history of the Samaritans has been often told; under Pilate they raised a tumult, headed by a leader who promised to show them (probably assuming the character of Messiah) the golden vessels said to have been buried by Moses on Gerizim. The cruelty with which this revolt was repressed led to Pilate's final disgrace.

In the time of Vespasian they again rebelled, and were again repressed. Under Hadrian they assisted the Romans against the Pharisees led by Bar Cocheba, but under Severus they took part in rebellion with the Jews.

The greatest revolt appears to have been, however, in the time of Justinian, when the whole race rose in May, 529 A.D., attacked the Christians, put the Bishop of Neapolis to death, and crowned a certain Julian. Their repression was cruel, and henceforward they disappear from history, being probably almost exterminated.

The Emperor Zeno had in 474 A.D. erected a church on Gerizim. This church Justinian converted into a sort of fortress by building a second wall round it. He also caused five churches (possibly all now represented by mosques) to be rebuilt in Neapolis.

In the fifth century the Samaritans had begun to spread over Egypt and southern Palestine, in 493 A.D. they had a synagogue in Rome. In the seventh century, according to their own records, they occupied the whole of Palestine except the Judean hills. Up to some fifty years ago they had a synagogue in Gaza, the last of their communities, which in the seventeenth century also existed in Cairo and Damascus. At the present day they are found only in the town of Nablus, and appear to have become extinct in other towns about the year 1820 A.D.

In the middle ages they seem to have been undistinguished from the Jews, and thus it is only in the writings of a Jew (R. Benjamin of Tudela) that they are described. He speaks of about one hundred Cutheans "who observe the law of Moses

only," that is to say, do not recognise the later books. Though writing with the usual Pharisaic prejudice, the Rabbi admits the priestly family to be descendants of Aaron.

The existence of an ancient roll of the law, in possession of the Samaritans, was known to Scaliger; a copy was obtained by Pietro Della Valle in 1616 A.D., and this brought the Samaritans again into notice. They became a sort of pet people among learned men, and long correspondences were held with them. Thus, although the ancient copy at Shechem has never been collated, the value of the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch is well known to students.

The most striking peculiarity of the Samaritan text is its close resemblance to the Septuagint version. This caused a most exaggerated estimate of its value to be at one time formed. It was supposed that the Masoretic text, from which our English version has been taken, was corrupt, and the Samaritan and Greek the more ancient. The labours of the great scholar Gesenius have, however, almost placed these questions at rest. He points out that though the Samaritan and Greek agree against the Masoretic text in about one thousand passages, there are numerous instances where Greek and Hebrew agree against the Samaritan. He further holds that the archaic forms of the Hebrew have been modernised in the Samaritan, and numerous corruptions introduced

from purely theological reasons. The variations of the text he divided into three classes: first, Samaritan forms of words; secondly, blunders and emendations in the text; thirdly, alterations for the glorification of Gerizim and of the Samaritans. It cannot be doubted that in some cases, however, the Samaritan and Greek preserve the sense which has been lost in the Jewish version; Gesenius's conclusion will commend itself to all by its moderation and impartiality. He holds that Samaritan and Greek are both derived from ancient codices, differing among themselves and also from the text which became received later by the Jews. Kennicott goes yet further in saying that the authority of both the versions should be recognised. The antiquity of the text from which our English version is derived, is however established by the comparison, and unless the oldest Samaritan roll differ very materially from all other copies as yet collated, we cannot expect to get much of any permanent value or interest from its examination.

The Rolls of the Law, or Five Books of Moses (considered by the Samaritans to form a single work), now found in the synagogue at Nablus are three in number. I have twice been enabled to see them; at Jerusalem also I was shown another manuscript, not a roll but in the form of a book, which is called "The Fire-Tried," as it claims to be one of Sanballat's copies before noticed.

These venerable documents may now be briefly described.

The Samaritan synagogue stands in the Samaritan quarter, the south-western part of the town of Nablus. It is a mean room, with white-washed walls, and a dome with a skylight. A dirty counterpane is hung before a recess, called the Musbah, in which is a cupboard. From behind this veil the manuscripts are produced. At my first visit the high-priest Amram brought out the latest scroll. It is written in black ink on parchment, and rolled on two rollers, enclosed in two cylinders of brass, covered with a florid arabesque of thin silver plates fastened on to the brass. This scroll is kept on a shelf of the cupboard, the other two are locked up. The case is enveloped in a green silk wrapper, embroidered with arabesques. Mr. Drake, who accompanied me, now asked to see the next. The high-priest answered, after affecting great surprise, that his nephew Jacob had the key; he, however, was soon persuaded to send his son to fetch it, and brought out from the locker the second, which is of older appearance, also in a brass case, with huge knobs to the rollers. By means of these rollers the parchment is slipped round, so that each column of the roll is visible in turn. The workmanship in this case is better than that of the first. The cherubim, pot of manna, Aaron's rod, and other sacred objects, are shown in the arabesque. There is a legend with

the date 820 A.H., or 1456 A.D., which gives the name of the maker as Jacob ben Phoki, a Damascene. The writing in this manuscript appears to have been touched up later.

The high-priest and his nephew Jacob now declared that there was no older scroll, but Mr. Drake said he had seen it, and at length they were reduced to saying that being ceremonially unclean they could not touch it. We accordingly stepped behind the veil, the locker was opened, and we saw the famous roll of Abishuah in a solid silver cover of modern workmanship. The greatest reluctance was manifested in showing us this sacred relic; the priests exclaimed, "Permission!" and "In the name of God." The roll is said to have been written on the skins of about twenty rams, which were slain as thank-offerings, the writing being on the hair side; the hand-writing is small and rather irregular, the lines far apart, the ink is faded and of a purplish hue, the parchment much torn, very yellow, and patched in places.

Down the centre of the scroll runs the famous title called Tarîkh or "Inscription," a sort of acrostic. By thickening one or two letters in each line in a vertical column, the following has been obtained:

"I Abishuah, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, the favour of Jehovah be upon them, for His glory I have written this

Holy Torah (copy of the law) in the entrance of the tabernacle of the congregation on Mount Gerizim, even Bethel, in the thirteenth year of the possession by the children of Israel of the land of Canaan and all its boundaries. I thank the Lord."

My second visit was paid after the death of Amram, in company with Lieutenant Kitchener and Mr. Elkarey the missionary. Jacob, the old man's nephew, was now high-priest; on the 10th of June, 1875, we repaired again to the synagogue. The high-priest, an eminently handsome man about thirty-five years of age, received us, dressed in robes of dark purple, with the crimson turban; his brown beard long and square, not marred at the corners, his dark eyes with drooping lids, the beautiful olive complexion and delicate aquiline nose, perhaps a little too square at the end, made him a model of beauty of a certain type—the Jewish beauty, for which the priestly family of the Maccabees was so famous, and which captivated Herod the Great in Mariamne, the last of her race.

Hastily admitting us, he locked the door, and brought us to the veil now covered over with a gorgeous yellow satin cloth. A younger priest brought out the second manuscript, but was hastily told "not that one," and the silver case once more appeared, and was placed on a sort of trestle. Whilst we examined it, some urchins got up on

the roof and looked through the skylight. The priest was alarmed, he drove them away, replaced the old scroll, unlocked the door, and showed us the other two.

There is a marked difference in the treatment Abishuah's roll receives at the hands of the priests. It is indeed a Samaritan Fetish, and is only seen by the congregation once a year, when elevated above the priest's head on the Day of Atonement.

The so-called "Fire-tried Manuscript" belongs to a poor widow in Jerusalem, named Mrs. Ducat. She lent it to a German savant named Dr. Jacob Frederic Kraus, and his essay on the manuscript is kept with it. The whole consists of 217 leaves, containing the Torah or law, from the twenty-ninth verse of the first chapter of Genesis to the blessing of Moses in Deuteronomy. Six leaves are added in a smaller hand on parchment at the beginning, the first being almost illegible. The real manuscript only begins at Gen. xi. 11; three leaves are added at the end for protection, after Deut. xxix. 30. The whole is much worn, and measures eleven inches by nine inches, and three inches in thickness. The text is divided into paragraphs, with verses, sentences, and words separated by a single dot; words are not allowed to be broken by the line, but in order to fill up the line the last letters are further apart, unless they form the word Jehovah which is read Elwem. The letters are not so small as those of Abishuah's roll, nor as

large as those of the later roll; the hand is steady and uniform. The Decalogue is not numbered by marginal letters, in this respect it resembles Abishuah's roll, and so also the paragraphs are neither numbered nor stated in either text. These points seem to show the Fire-tried manuscript to be ancient.

Some hundreds of the Samaritan copies of the law have the acrostic like Abishuah's roll, each giving the name, place, and date of the text; but the Fire-tried Manuscript has a note instead at the end of Genesis to this effect:

"This holy Torah has been made by a wise, valiant, and great son, a good, a beloved, and an understanding leader, a master of all knowledge, by Shelomo, son of Saba, a valiant man, leader of the congregation, by his knowledge and his understanding, and he was a righteous man, an interpreter of the Torah, a father of blessings, of the sons of Nun (may the Lord be merciful to them!); and it was appointed to be dedicated holy to the Lord, that they might read therein with fear and prayer in the House of the High-Priesthood in the seventh month, the tenth day; and this was done before me, and I am Ithamar, son of Aaron, son of Ithamar the High-Priest; may the Lord renew his strength! Amen."

A note at the end of the Book of Numbers connects this manuscript with the story given above from the Samaritan Book of Joshua.

"It came out from the fire by the power of the Lord to the hand of the King of Babel, in the presence of Zerubbabel the Jew, and was not burnt. Thanks be to the Lord for the Law of Moses."

This curious manuscript, which has been photographed for the Palestine Exploration Fund, came into Mr. Ducat's hands from a Samaritan in payment of a bad debt. It has been in England, and was then offered for sale for £1000. In 1872, £200 was asked for it. There were faint traces of gilding on the proper names still visible when shown to me in August of the same year.

Turning again to the Samaritans themselves. In 1872 the little community numbered 135 souls, of whom no less than eighty were males. The Moslems say that the number is never exceeded, and that one of the eighty dies as soon as a child is born. By the defection of Jacob Shellaby with his family, they have been reduced to a total of 130 souls.

Year by year the Samaritans are dying out. Clinging to Shechem and the Holy Mountain, they are the last left of the nation which in the fifth and seventh centuries spread far over Palestine and Egypt.

The religion of the Samaritans approaches probably closer to original Judaism than anything among the Jews themselves. Even their view that Gerizim was intended to be the Temple mountain is not without foundation, for while the

blessings and curses are placed on the two Samaritan mountains, Jerusalem is not noticed in the books of Moses.

The first Samaritan doctrine is the Unity of God and His special revelation to Israel. They hold Moses to be the one messenger of God, and superior even to their expected Prophet; they believe in the immutability and perfection of the written law, and finally in Gerizim as the earth's centre, the house of God, the highest mountain on earth, the only one not covered by the flood, the site of altars raised by Adam, Seth, and Noah, the Mount Moriah of Abraham's sacrifice, the Bethel or Luz of Jacob's vision, the place where Joshua erected first an altar, next the tabernacle, finally a temple. On its slope the cave of Makkedah is also shown, though now closed up. From all these sacred memories it becomes naturally the central shrine of Samaritan faith.

It appears also that they believe in future retribution, and in angels and devils as ministers of God in the unseen world, but their views as to the future life seem to be vague.

Still more interesting is the question of the Samaritan belief in a future prophet who is to be of the sons of Joseph. This expectation, founded on the words of Moses, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet like unto me," (Deut. xviii. 15.), is identical with the Jewish ex-

pectation in Maccabean times. It is to this belief, no doubt, that the Samaritan woman refers in the conversation at Jacob's well, "I know that Messias cometh" (John v. 25). In 1860 the Samaritans believed the Prophet to be already on earth. His name is to begin with the letter M, his titles are Taheb the "restorer," and El Mahdy the "guide." Following his direction the congregation will repair to Gerizim, under the famous "twelve stones" will find the Ten Commandments, and under the stone of Bethel the golden vessels of the Temple and the manna. After one hundred and ten years the Prophet is to die and be buried beside Joseph in the valley. Soon after, on the conclusion of seven thousand years from its foundation, the world is to come to an end.

Whilst agreeing with the Jews in the acceptance of the law in its strictest and most limited interpretation as immutable and everlasting, the Samaritans differ in many minor points as to its interpretation, not only as regards Gerizim, but also in such matters for instance as the rights of the widow who is married to the nearest relation and not to the brother of her husband. They allow bigamy if the first wife be childless, but do not permit more than two wives; they do not allow earrings to be worn, because of the use of earrings in the moulding of the golden calf. Any member of the priest's family may be made a priest

if twenty-five years old, and if his hair has never been cut. The men marry at fifteen, the girls at twelve, the dowry given by the husband being from forty to sixty pounds. Generally speaking they adhere more closely to the original spirit of the law than do the Jews, and have not invented any of those evasions which are described in the Talmud.

These details, with many more too minute to be now discussed, will be found in Juynboll's edition of the Samaritan Book of Joshua, in Nutt's "Sketch of Samaritan History," and in Mills' "Modern Samaritans." It is needless to say that the various accusations of idolatry which have been brought against these unorthodox Israelites (unorthodox from a Jewish point of view) are groundless. They do not and never have worshipped a dove, the story originating probably in their belief in a miraculous dove which carried letters for Joshua; as to the statement that they hold the world to have been created by a goat, it appears to be altogether an invention.

A few words must be added as to the great feasts held yearly, though I have never been so fortunate as to witness the Passover on Gerizim. In addition to this great festival, the Samaritans keep the Feast of Pentecost, and the Fast of Atonement when the Torah is displayed and kissed, the law read, and sleeping, eating, and talking alike forbidden. On the first day of the

Feast of Tabernacles they repair to booths of arbutus boughs pitched on the side of Gerizim; these, with the Sabbath, which is very strictly observed, and a feast in memory of the deliverance from Egypt, form their principal festivals.

The sacrifice on Gerizim, called Karaban Afsah, has been graphically described by one of the most picturesque writers on the Holy Land. A brief *résumé* of his and other accounts will render the present sketch more complete.

After special preparation by prayer and the reading of the Law, the congregation repair to the plateau or lower spur which runs out west from the high ridge of Gerizim where are the ruins of the ancient Temple, and it is at this time covered with white tents; it is, however, only within the last thirty years that this has been allowed by the Moslems. At sunset on the 15th of Nizan the service begins, the High Priest standing on a large stone surrounded by a low dry stone wall. A certain proportion of the congregation wear long white robes, and all have white turbans instead of the usual red one. Six sheep are slain, as the sun goes down, by the Samaritan butcher cutting their throats; the entrails and right fore-legs are cut off and burnt; the bodies are scalded with water from two huge cauldrons heated over a fire of brushwood, the fleeces removed, the legs skewered, and the bodies then thrust into a sort of oven in the ground (Tannûr in Arabic), covered

with a hurdle and with sods of earth. Here for five hours they are baked. The oven, lined with stone, can be seen on the mountain all the year round. The men of the congregation gird themselves with ropes, and with staves in their hands and shoes on their feet as though prepared for a journey, they surround the meat when brought out, and generally eat standing or walking; of late years, however, they have been seen seated. The Jews have always eaten the Passover seated, in Palestine, but until lately the Samaritans have adhered to the ancient and prescribed form to eat "in haste." The scene of the feast, dimly visible by the light of a few candles, is one of unique interest, taking the spectator back for thousands of years to the early period of Jewish history. The men eat first, next to them the women; the scraps are burnt, and a bonfire kindled and fed with the fat; the rest of the night is spent in prayer for four hours. On the following day rejoicings continue; fish, rice, and eggs are eaten, wine and spirits drunk, and hymns, generally impromptu, are sung. On the 21st of the month another pilgrimage is made to Gerizim, forming the eighth festival held by the nation.

Such is a slight sketch, compiled partly from personal inquiries and partly from various standard authorities, of the history and customs of the Samaritans. To sum up the points principally worthy of consideration, We have seen that while the

later Jewish accounts are contradictory as to the origin of this people, and the Bible itself silent, we have their own assertion that they are the remaining descendants of the Ten Tribes of Israel. We have noticed that their physiognomy leads to the conclusion that they are of the same stock with the Jews, that their sacred book is a version of the Pentateuch and their religion a very pure form of Judaism, that the first became apparently their religious standard before the time of Ezra, and that it is inconceivable that they should have adopted Jewish dogmas at a period when they were distinguished by their hatred of that nation. Finally, we see their doctrines to be in the main identical with those of the most ancient Jewish party, the Karaite or Sadducean.

From these various reasons the conclusion which appears to me personally to follow is, that the Samaritans are to be believed in respect of their account of their own origin, and that in them we find the only true descendants of Israel, and the only remnant of the Ten Tribes with exception perhaps of those still dispersed in Assyria, who have, however, deserted their original faith.

The subject which naturally next claims attention is that of the sacred Samaritan places, and of their relation to the Biblical history. The sites in question are all grouped in the immediate vicinity of Shechem.

The modern town of Nâblus (the Roman Neapolis) probably occupies, in part at least, the site of the ancient Shechem, as is indicated by the proximity of the modern cemetery to the greater number of the Jewish rock-cut sepulchres. It is a town of some thirteen thousand inhabitants, of whom all but about six hundred are Moslems of a very fanatical spirit. The town is well built, containing several fine houses and a good bazaar. It is surrounded with walls and is long and narrow, situate at the head of the great valley called "Valley of Barley" which runs west to Samaria.

The Vale of Shechem is from a quarter to half a mile wide north and south, hemmed in between the twin mountains, Ebal and Gerizim, the summits of which are two miles apart in a line. The valley is the most luxuriant in Palestine; long rivulets, fed by no less than eighty springs (according to the natives), run down the hill-slopes and murmur in the deep ravine; gardens surround the city walls; figs, walnuts, mulberries, oranges, lemons, olives, pomegranates, vines, plums, and every species of vegetable grow in abundance, and the green foliage and sparkling streams refresh the eye. But as at Damascus, the oasis is set in a desert, and the stony, barren mountains contrast strongly with the green orchards below.

The Crusaders have left their mark on the town, the ruined "Leper's Mosque" to the east seems to have been probably the Hospital. The Great

Mosque is a Byzantine Basilica, with an outer court, having on the east a fine Gothic portal. The little chapel of the "Wailing of Jacob" (over his lost son Joseph) was also once a Christian church. The names of the six quarters of the city appear to be ancient.

Just inside the town wall is a modern Moslem mosque, dedicated to the "Ten Sons of Jacob," and the site is probably connected with an ancient tradition mentioned by St. Jerome in his account of Sta. Paula's travels. Olive groves extend eastwards for half a mile from the town, and also on the west there are groves where the lepers have taken up their abode. The ancient ruins extend some way beyond the walls on the east, and the foundations of a former monastery exist above the road on the south-west.

South of Nâblus rises the rocky and steep shoulder of Gerizim. The mountain is L-shaped, the highest ridge (2848.8 feet above the sea) runs north and south, and a lower ridge projects westwards from it. The top is about 1000 feet above the bottom of the valley east of Shechem. As compared with other Judean mountains, the outline of Gerizim is very fine; the lower part consists of white chalk, which has been quarried, leaving huge caverns visible above the groves which clothe the feet of the hill. Above this formation comes the dark blue Nummulitic limestone, barren and covered with shingle, rising in

ledges and long slopes to the summit. The whole of the northern face of the mountain abounds with springs, the largest of which, with ruins of a little Roman shrine to its Genius, was close to our camp.

In ascending to the summit of the western spur of Gerizim, by the path up the gully behind our camp, the contrast was striking between the bright green of the gardens dotted with red pomegranate blossoms and the steel-grey of the barren slope. Riding eastwards and gradually ascending, we first reached the little dry-stone enclosures and the oven used during the Passover. There are scattered stones round, but no distinct ruins of any buildings; the place is called Lôzeh or Luz, but the reason of this appears to have escaped notice. The title is of Samaritan origin, and is due to their view that Gerizim is the real site of Bethel or Luz, the scene of Jacob's vision.

The highest part of the mountain is covered by the ruins of Justinian's fortress, built 533 A.D., in the midst of which stands Zeno's church, constructed in 474 A.D. The foundations alone are visible, showing an octagon with its entrance on the north, and remains of six side chapels; the fortress is a rectangle 180 feet east and west, 230 north and south, with towers at the corners; that on the south-west being now a little mosque dedicated to Sheikh Ghanim, who is, according to the Samaritans, Shechem, the son of Hamor. The

fortress walls are built of those constantly recurring drafted stones which are often loosely described as Jewish or Phœnician masonry, though the practised eye soon discriminates between the original style of the Temple at Jerusalem and the rude, rustic bosses of the Byzantines and Crusaders.

A huge reservoir exists, north of the castle which is called El Kŭl'ah in Arabic, and below this a spur of the hill projects, artificially severed by a ditch and covered with the traces of a former fortress. This is perhaps the station of the Roman guards, who thus prevented the Samaritans from approaching Gerizim, for it commands the southern ascent to the mountain.

Of the ancient Samaritan Temple the only relics are probably the remains of massive masonry known as the "Twelve Stones" ('Asherah Balatât), near the west wall of Justinian's fortress. They are huge blocks rudely squared, forming one course of a foundation, the north-west corner of which was laid bare by Captain Anderson's excavation in 1866. There are two courses, and the lower one contains thirteen stones; this course, however, was not formerly visible, and the Samaritans considered twelve stones alone to lie buried, and to be those brought from Jordan at the time of Joshua—thus supposing some supernatural agency sufficient to carry such huge blocks up a steep slope 1000 feet high, to say nothing of the journey

from the Jordan. Under these stones, as before noticed, the treasures of the old Temple are supposed to lie hidden.

South of the fortress is one of those flat slabs of rock which occur all over the summit. It shelves slightly down westward, and at this end is a rock-cut cistern. The whole is surrounded by a low drystone wall. This is the Sacred Rock of the Samaritans, and the cave is traditionally that in which the tabernacle was made. At the time of my second visit some peasants were using the Sacred Rock as a threshing-floor. Rude stone walls extend on every side, and farther south there is a curious flight of steps leading down east. They are called the "seven steps of Abraham's altar," and just beneath them, on the edge of the eastern precipice at the southern extremity of the plateau, there is a little trough cut in the rock resembling the Passover oven. This the Samaritans suppose to be the site of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, for their version of the story reads "Moreh" instead of Moriah, and makes Gerizim the scene of the Patriarch's trial.

This question has been taken up by Dean Stanley, who favours the Samaritan view; but it must not be forgotten that Moriah is distinctly stated in the Bible (2 Chron. iii. 1) to be the hill on which the Temple was built at Jerusalem, as also the scene of Isaac's sacrifice (Gen. xxii. 2).

The view from the summit of Gerizim is exten-

sive and interesting. Northward the dome-like top of Ebal shuts out the distance, whilst the eastern half of Nâblus, with its gardens, is seen below. The numerous hills of the "Land of Tampne," as the Crusaders called it, with the dark wooded height of Jebel Hazkîn, or "Ezekiel's Mountain," and the gorge which leads down by Salem to the waters of Ænon, appear to the right. On the east the broad Plain of Moreh lies at our feet, and the mountains of Gilead rise blue and clear behind; in the middle of the plain stands 'Awertah, the place of entombment of the sons of Aaron; farther south are the mountains round Shiloh and Tell 'Asûr (the ancient Baal Hazor), loftier than even Ebal itself by some 300 feet. The ridge of Gerizim joins on the south the chain of Mount Salmon, on whose summit in 1874 the snow lay white and thick as late as March. Gradually turning to the south-west the gleaming sand-hills and the shining sea appear, and the stone villages of the Beni S'ab hills stand up like towers in mid distance. Here on a clear day the brown ruins of Cæsarea, once the scene of bloody feuds between Jews and Samaritans, can be descried; and farther north the range above Samaria is seen over the shoulder of Gerizim, and behind this the dark woods and volcanic crater of Sheikh Iskander, with Carmel faint and blue in the extreme distance.

On the 24th of July in 1872, I looked round from this point on a strange land in every direction.

On the 10th of June, 1875, I again stood on the summit, and could name each village visible, and recognise each high hill as one on which I had stood once at least in the years which intervened; for on the first occasion the great Survey was slowly commencing, and painfully pushing northwards; on the second it was drawing rapidly to a successful conclusion, and we were marching northwards, ignorant of the rude check we were destined, as will be seen, to receive at Safed.

Crossing the narrow valley on another July day, the Survey-party ascended the eastern brow of Ebal. The Mount of the Curses is even more barren than Gerizim, the Mount of Blessing. Cactus-hedges clothe its feet, on which the culture of the cochineal insect has lately been tried without success. The slope of steel-blue rock is less abrupt than that of Gerizim, but a band of precipitous cliffs exists near the summit. The mountain is dome-shaped, its top (3076·5 feet above the sea) is higher than those of any mountains near, though both in Judea and in Galilee more lofty points occur; thus Ebal is a conspicuous object from all sides, especially from the north and from the maritime plain. The southern face of the hill has no springs on it, but many occur on the north. The southern slopes are covered with corn, and at sunset the orange-coloured flush over the bare rocks produces a startling contrast to the rich foliage of the valley beneath.

There are three curious places on Ebal; one of which is a rude stone building, enclosing a space of fifty feet square, with walls twenty feet thick, in which are chambers. The Samaritans call it part of a ruined village, but its use and origin are a mystery. It resembles most the curious monuments near Hizmeh, called the "Tombs of the Sons of Israel." The second place is the little cave and ruined chapel of Sitt Eslamîyeh, "the Lady of Islam," who has given her name to the mountain. It is perched on the side of a precipice, and is held sacred by the Moslems, who have a tradition that the bones of the Saint were carried hither through the air from Damascus. The third place is a site the importance of which has not been previously recognised. It is a little Moslem Mukâm, said once to have been a church, called 'Amâd ed Dîn, the "Monument of the Faith." The name thus preserved has no connection with Samaritan tradition, but it is undisputed that the sacred places of the peasantry often represent spots famous in Bible history. It is therefore perhaps possible that the site thus reverenced is none other than that of the monumental altar of twelve stones from Jordan, which Joshua erected, according to the Biblical account, on Ebal, and not on Gerizim as the Samaritans believe, charging the Jews with having altered the names (Deut. xxvii. 4). Another possible origin for the title "Monument of the Faith"

is, however, to be noticed in a later chapter, for the Crusaders seem to have regarded the place as the Dan of Jeroboam's Calf Temple.

In the account given of the reading of the Law, we find that the Israelites stood half "over against" Gerizim, half over against Ebal, and that an altar of whole stones was built "in Mount Ebal," where also a copy of the law was written by Joshua (Josh. viii. 30, 33). Later on we find reference to a great stone under an oak by "the holy place of Jehovah" (Josh. xxiv. 26), and the same place is probably intended by "the oak of the pillar that was in Shechem" (Judges ix. 6); it is even conjectured that the "oak which was by Shechem," where Jacob hid the strange gods (Gen. xxxv. 4), was the same place. The pillar of the oak must not be confused with the altar on Ebal, and we have next to discuss the question of the probable position of this sacred oak.

It has been pointed out by Canon Williams and other writers that a natural amphitheatre exists between Ebal and Gerizim in the sloping sides of two recesses opposite each other, formed by a tributary valley from each hill; there is space for the assembly of a vast multitude, and the voice of a speaker in the valley could probably have been heard by the entire congregation, though such a requirement is not necessarily involved in the description of the reading of the law. It is striking to find here at the foot of Gerizim a

place called the "Pillar," but it cannot represent the altar on Ebal, and if it be the great stone by the oak, where Joshua made a covenant with Israel, it has no direct connection with the reading of the law. The Mosque of the Pillar (el 'Amûd) is a little shrine similar to many in the country with small whitewashed domes and a wall surrounding a little garden. The gate is on the north, and cool pitchers of water here await the thirsty pilgrim; within is a paved court shaded by an aged tree, shrubs and palms are visible through the doorway, and the small building stands in the midst with whitewashed walls and wooden door. The modern Samaritans seem to regard this as the true site of Joshua's stone by the oak (Josh. xxiv. 26).

It is not, however, at this mosque that the Samaritan chronicles and the early Christian pilgrims seem to agree in placing the site of the oak. Jerome and Eusebius speak of a place called Balanus or Balata, the Samaritan or Aramaic equivalent of Elon an "oak," and the same place is noticed in the Samaritan chronicles under the Arabic titles of Balata and Shejr el Kheir (the "tree of grace"). The site is thus carried about half a mile east to the village of Bâlâta (equivalent to Ballut, an "oak"), close to Jacob's Well.

The sites which next attract attention are situate at the point where the Vale of Shechem

opens into the Plain of the Mŭkhnah or "camp." Here close together we find Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb, and in connection with them our attention turns naturally to the Sychar of St. John's Gospel.

The tradition of Jacob's Well is one in which Jews, Samaritans, Moslems, and Christians alike agree. Its credibility is thus much increased, for there are only three other sites as to the position of which such unanimity exists, namely the site of the Temple at Jerusalem and those of Joseph's and Eleazar's Tombs. In addition to this argument there are other reasons which lead to the belief that the tradition is trustworthy; the proximity of Joseph's Tomb, and of Sychar, and finally the fact of a well existing at all in a place abounding with streams, one of which is within one hundred yards' distance. No other important well is found near, and the utility of such a work can only be explained on the assumption that it was necessary for the Patriarch to have water within his own land, surrounded as he was by strangers who may naturally be supposed to have guarded jealously their rights to the springs. By digging the well Jacob avoided those quarrels from which his father had suffered in the Philistine country, pursuing a policy of peace which appears generally to have distinguished his actions.

The well then, as being one of the few undoubted sites made sacred by the feet of Christ, is a spot

of greater interest than any near Shechem. Its neighbourhood is not marked by any very prominent monument, and indeed it would be quite possible to pass by it without knowing of its existence. Just east of the gardens of Balâta, a dusty mound by the road half covers the stumps of three granite columns. After a few moments' search a hole is found south of them, and by this the visitor descends through the roof of a little vault, apparently modern, as shown in the illustration. The vault stretches twenty feet east and west, and is ten feet broad, the hole in the pointed arch of the roof being in the north-east corner. The floor is covered with fallen stones which block the mouth of the well; through these we let down the tape and found the depth to be seventy-five feet. The diameter is seven feet six inches, the whole depth cut through alluvial soil and soft rock receiving water by infiltration through the sides. There appears to be occasionally as much as two fathoms of water, but in summer the well is dry. The little vault is built on to a second, running at right angles northwards from the west end, but the communication is now walled up. In this second vault there are said to be remains of a tesselated pavement, and the bases of the three columns rest on this floor, the shafts sticking out through the roof, a sufficient proof that the vault is modern.

The view from the well is good: on the south

the rugged slopes of Gerizim; on the west the olives in the Vale of Shechem, with Ebal rising behind, and the little hamlet of Balâta, with its fig gardens, the whitewashed walls and dome of Joseph's Tomb, the mud huts of Sychar; on the north-east the neighbourhood of Shalem whence Jacob first came; and on the east the broad brown Plain of the Mŭkhnah, named perhaps (for the word is of Hebrew origin) from the great encampment of Israel at the time of the first conquest.

A Christian church was built before 383 A.D. round Jacob's Well, but did not exist apparently in 333 A.D., when the Bordeaux Pilgrim visited the spot. Bishop Arculph, in 700 A.D., gives a plan which shows the building as cruciform, with the well in the middle; and St. Willibald (722 A.D.) mentions it as standing in his day. It was probably founded by Constantine and destroyed in the invasion of Omar, for in Crusading times it had disappeared. To this church the pavement and pillars seem to have belonged. As late as 1555 A.D. a little altar stood in the vault on which yearly mass was offered, but this practice is now discontinued. I confess that for one I should be sorry to see modern restorations attempted at this sacred spot; the present ruin takes back the mind far more to ancient memories than would any newly designed building of European taste, failing, as it must do, to harmonise with the oriental surroundings. The site now belongs to the Greek Church.

About six hundred yards north of the well is the traditional Tomb of Joseph, venerated by the members of every religious community in Palestine. The building stands on the road-side from Balâta to 'Askar, at the end of a row of fine fig-trees. The enclosure is square and roofless, the walls whitewashed and in good repair, for, as an inscription on the south wall in English informs the visitor, it was rebuilt by Consul Rogers, the friend of the Samaritans, in 1868; it is about twenty-five feet square, and on the north is another building of equal size, but older and partly ruinous, surmounted by a little dome. The tomb itself resembles most of the Moslem cenotaphs—a long narrow block with an arched or vaulted roof having a pointed cross section. It is rudely plastered, and some seven feet long and three feet high. It is placed askew, and nearest to the west wall of the court. A stone bench is built into the east wall, on which three Jews were seated at the time of our second visit, book in hand, swinging backwards and forwards as they crooned out a nasal chant—a prayer no doubt appropriate to the place.

The most curious point to notice is, however, the existence of two short pillars, one at the head, the other at the foot of the tomb, having shallow cup-shaped hollows at their tops. These hollows are blackened by fire, for the Jews have the custom of burning sacrifices on them, small

articles such as handkerchiefs, gold lace, or shawls being consumed. Whether this practice is also observed by the Samaritans is doubtful.

The tomb points approximately north and south, thus being at right angles to the direction of Moslem tombs north of Mecca. How the Mohammedans explain this disregard of orientation in so respected a Prophet as "our Lord Joseph," I have never heard; perhaps the rule is held to be only established since the time of Mohammed. The veneration in which the shrine is held by the Moslem peasantry is, at all events, not diminished by this fact.

The little village of 'Askar stands on the slope of Ebal within sight of Jacob's Well, about half a mile from it and little over a mile from Nâblus. It is merely a collection of mud-hovels like Balâta or any village near, but it has a spring issuing from a curious cave, and ancient rock-cut sepulchres beneath it, so that it is in all probability an ancient site.

It is here no doubt that we recognise the Sychar of the Fourth Gospel. An unaccountable confusion has grown up lately between Sychar and Shechem, for which the Crusaders are originally responsible, as they are indeed for most of the false theories on sacred sites. It is only through careful study, and by such work as that of the Survey, that we are beginning to escape from the entanglements and confusion caused by the

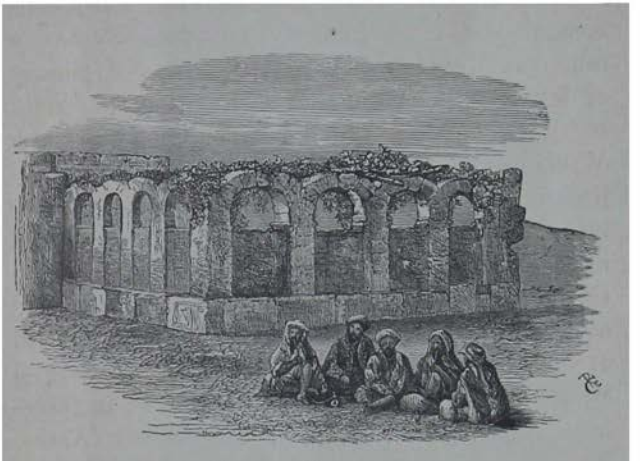
ignorance of knights and priests, arriving, in the twelfth century, strangers and illiterate enthusiasts in a hostile country.

It will be evident to all readers of the Gospel narrative that Sychar, "a city of Samaria" near Jacob's Well (John iv. 5—6), is a description hardly to be expected of Shechem, which is moreover mentioned by its original name in the New Testament (Acts vii. 16). The early Christians recognised the distinction, and place Sychar a mile east of Shechem, as noticed in the "Itinerary of Jerusalem," 333 A.D. It is clear that they refer to 'Askar, and the identity is maintained by Canon Williams and others; but a difficulty has always been felt by students because the modern name begins with a guttural, which cannot have occurred in the name Sychar. This difficulty the Samaritan Chronicle seems to me to remove, for in it we find a town mentioned apparently near Shechem, called Ischar, which is merely a vulgar pronunciation of Sychar; and the Samaritans themselves, in translating their Chronicle into Arabic, call it 'Askar. Thus the transition is traceable from the Hebrew form, having no meaning in Arabic but originally "a place walled in," through the Samaritan Ischar to the modern 'Askar, "a collection" or "army" in Arabic.

But one group of sacred places remains to be noticed in the village of 'Awertah, called Abearthah in the Samaritan dialect. It stands in the Plain

of the Mŭkhnah, and is sacred to the Samaritans and to the Jews as containing the tombs of Phinehas and Eleazar, Abishuah and Ithamar. It is probably to be recognised as the Hill of Phinehas where Eleazar was buried, according to the Bible (Josh. xxiv. 33), and which is described as in Mount Ephraim.

In 1872 I visited the village and examined the



TOMB OF PHINEHAS.

two principal monuments. That of Eleazar, west of the houses, is a rude structure of masonry in a court open to the air. It is eighteen feet long, plastered all over, and shaded by a splendid terebinth. In one corner is a little mosque with a Samaritan inscription bearing the date 1180 of

the Moslem era. The Tomb of Phinehas is apparently an older building, and the walls of its court have an arcade of round arches now supporting a trellis covered with a grape-vine; the floor is paved. A Samaritan inscription exists here as well as at the little mosque adjacent. The tombs of Ithamar, and of Abishuah author of the famous roll, are shown by the Samaritans close by.

The "Holy King Joshua" is said by the Samaritans to have been buried at Kefr Hâris, which they identify with Timnath Heres. This village is nine miles south of Nâblus.

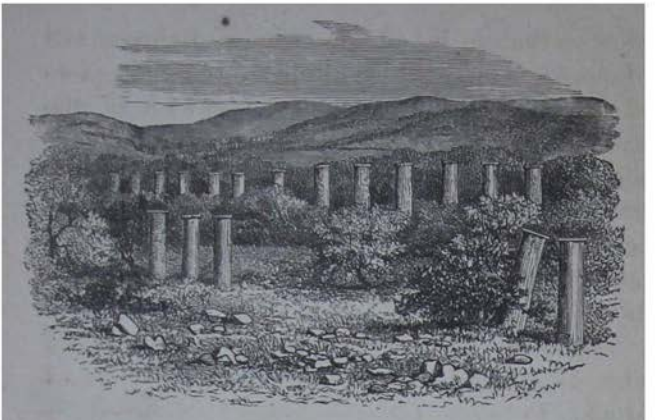
The Jewish pilgrim Rabbi Jacob of Paris visited Caphar Cheres—presumably Kefr Hâris, in 1258 A.D., and mentions the Tombs of Joshua, Nun, and Caleb. The Samaritans also hold that Caleb was buried with Joshua, and thus we have the curious result that Jews and Samaritans agree as to the site of these tombs, both placing them within the boundaries of Samaria. The Crusading writers point to the same site for Joshua's Tomb, and the place is marked on the map of Marino Sanuto (1322 A.D.) in the relative position of Kefr Hâris.

The modern village has three sacred places: one of Neby Nûn, the second Neby Lush'a, the third Neby Kifl. In the two first we recognise Nun and Joshua; the third also, the "Prophet of division by lot," seems to preserve a memory of

the leader who divided the inheritance to the children of Israel, though perhaps occupying the place of the medieval Tomb of Caleb.

The site of Joshua's Tomb seems therefore to be preserved by an indigenous tradition which is at least as authentic as that which fixes Joseph's Tomb. It is true that Jerome appears to indicate a different site, as will be seen in a subsequent chapter, but it seems only natural in a case of discordant traditions to give the preference to that which is traceable to Jewish and therefore indigenous origin, rather than to the conjectures of Christians from Europe.





HEROD'S COLONNADE. SAMARIA.

CHAPTER III.

THE SURVEY OF SAMARIA.

IT is a remarkable fact, but one which can scarce be disputed, that while the descriptions given of tribe boundaries and cities in the Book of Joshua are full and minute in the territory of Judea, and scarcely less so in Galilee, they are fragmentary and meagre within the bounds of Samaria. A short inspection of the topographical lists will convince any student of this fact; he will find there is no account of the conquest of Samaria, that the list of Royal Cities does not include the famous Samaritan towns, Shechem, Thebez, Acrabbi, and

others; that no list of the cities of Ephraim and Manasseh is included in the topographical chapters of the Book of Joshua, no description of the northern limits of Manasseh, and only a very slight one of the southern border, where that tribe marched with Ephraim. However it may be accounted for, the plain fact remains that this portion of the Book of Joshua is manifestly incomplete.

The result of this silence is that the number of sites of Biblical interest within the borders of Mount Ephraim and the hills of Manasseh is small, and hence this central portion of the land was one well fitted for our first survey operations, when attention had to be devoted exclusively to the technicalities of the work, and was fortunately not distracted by the necessity of studying difficult antiquarian questions.

The places of primary interest between the pass of the Robber's Fountain on the south and the Great Plain of Esdraelon on the north, are five in all. Shiloh just south of the Samaritan boundary, Samaria, Tirzah, Ænon and Dothan, north of the Vale of Shechem. These may now be described in order, and a short account given of the routine of the Survey and the adventures of the party when first starting from Nâblus under my command.

There is no site in the country fixed with greater certainty than that of Shiloh. The modern name Seilûn preserves the most archaic form

which is found in the Bible in the ethnic Shilonite (1 Kings xi. 29). The position of the ruin agrees exactly with the very definite description given in the Old Testament of the position of Shiloh as "on the north side of Bethel (now Beitîn), on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah" (Lubben) (Judges xxi. 19). It is just here that Seilûn still stands in ruins; the traveller leaves Bethel, descends into the gorge of the Robber's Fountain, and emerges into open ground near Sinjil (Casale Saint Gilles of the Crusaders). Here he leaves the main road to Shechem on the west, and passes over the corn-plain of Turmus Eyya (the Thormasia of the Talmud). The scenery of the wild mountains is finer than that in Judea; the red colour of the cliffs, which are of great height, is far more picturesque than the shapeless chalk mounds near Jerusalem; the fig-gardens and olive-groves are more luxuriant, but the crops are poor compared to those in the plain and round Bethlehem; Judea is the more fertile district, Mount Ephraim the more rugged and picturesque.

We approached Shiloh from the south, by a mountain-road of evident antiquity, from the little plain. The ruins of a modern village here occupy a sort of Tell or mound. On the east and north the site is shut in by bare and lofty hills of grey limestone, dotted over with a few fig-trees; on the south the plateau looks down on the plain just

crossed. A deep valley runs behind the town on the north, and in its sides are many rock-cut sepulchres; following its course westward, we again reached the main road, thus avoiding a steep pass, and turning northwards found the village of Lebonah perched on the hillside to the west of the road and north of Shiloh, as described in the Bible.

Shiloh was for 369 years, according to the Jews, the chosen abode of the Tabernacle and Ark. It is a question of no little interest whether this was the first spot selected after the conquest of the hills by Joshua. That Shiloh became the gathering-place after the conquest of Shechem there is abundant proof (Josh. xxii. 12), and it may be inferred that the Tabernacle was placed there early; but, on the other hand, we have the expression "Sanctuary of the Lord" (or Holy Place of Jehovah) applied at the same period to a place near Shechem (Josh. xxiv. 25), possibly to Gerizim itself, and we may perhaps gather that, though not recognised by the doctors of the Mishna, there was a time when the Tabernacle stood, as is believed by the Samaritans, near Shechem. The date they give for its transference to Shiloh, in the time of Eli, whom they consider to be the first schismatical leader of the children of Judah, does not, however, accord with the Biblical account, and the story is no doubt due to the influence of religious hatred.

The site being so certainly known, it becomes of interest to speculate as to the exact position of the Tabernacle. Below the top of the hill, on the north of the ruins, there is a sort of irregular quadrangle, sloping rather to the west, and perched above terraces made for agricultural purposes. The rock has here been rudely hewn in two parallel scarps for over 400 feet, with a court between, seventy-seven feet wide, and sunk five feet below the outer surface. Thus there would be sufficient room for the court of the Tabernacle in this area. From the Mishna we learn that the lower part of the Tabernacle erected at Shiloh was of stone, with a tent above.

There are, however, two other places which demand attention as possible sites, one being perhaps a synagogue, the other a little building called the "Mosque of the Servants of God."

The building which I have called a synagogue is situate on a slope south of the ruins of Shiloh. It is thirty-seven feet square, and built of good masonry. The door is on the north, and is surmounted by a flat lintel, on which is a design in bold relief, representing vases and wreaths. Inside there are pillars with capitals seemingly Byzantine. A sloping scarp has been built against the wall on three sides, and a little mosque sacred to El Arb'aîn—"the Forty" Companions of the Prophet—is built on to the east wall. There is a pointed arch on the west wall. Thus we have at least

three periods—that of the old synagogue represented by the lintel, which is similar to the lintels of Galilean synagogues, that of a later Christian erection, and finally the Moslem mosque, built probably where the apse of the chapel would have been placed.

The Jami'a el Yeteim, or "Mosque of the Servants of God," is situate at the southern foot of the Tell. It is shaded by a large oak-tree, and is of good masonry like that of the last; there was nothing very remarkable in the little low chamber within, but the name seems to preserve a tradition of the position of the Tabernacle.

The only water close to the village was once contained in a little tank with steps, south of the lower mosque. There is, however, a fine spring placed, as is often to be observed in Palestine, at a distance of no less than three quarters of a mile from the town, at the head of the valley which comes down behind the ruins from the east. A good supply of water here issues into a rocky basin, and was once carried by an underground aqueduct to a rock-cut tank, but is now allowed to run waste.

The vineyards of Shiloh have disappeared, though very possibly once surrounding the spring, and perhaps extending down the valley westwards, where water is also found. With the destruction of the village desolation has spread over the barren hills around.

A yearly feast was held at Shiloh, when the women came out to dance in the vineyards (Judges xxi. 21). It is possible that a tradition of this festival is retained in the name Merj el 'Aid, "Meadow of the Feast," to the south of the present site.

Shiloh lies in so remote a situation, so hidden by its surrounding hills, and so out of the main highways, that neither the early pilgrims nor the Crusaders seem to have ever known of its position, and it is unnoticed by any writer but Jerome before the sixteenth century. The Crusaders considered Neby Samwîl (or Mount Joy, as they preferred to call it) to be Shiloh, and also Ramathaim Zophim, or, Gibeah of Saul. Such wild ideas are sufficient to show their ignorance of the Bible, and are only noticeable as among the curiosities of Palestine geography.

The Tabernacle and Ark remained so long at this spot that it was regarded by the Jews as only second to Jerusalem in sanctity. A curious peculiarity of their worship is noticed in the Mishna, where they are said to have been allowed to eat certain sacrifices at any spot whence the Tabernacle could be seen, but not farther from it. As Shiloh was shut in by mountains, the effect must have been to gather the congregation much oftener to this remote valley, than when, at Nob or Gibeon, the same sacrifices (the second tithes) might be eaten in any of the cities of Israel.

The road from Shechem to Samaria leads down the course of the western valley through groves of ancient olives with gardens of pomegranates and figs. The olives are more picturesque than in Judea, as the trees are not regularly arranged in quincunx order, but grow almost wild with a tangled underwood. Those in the valley beneath Nâblus seem to be of great age, and have split up into two or three stems from one root, with numerous suckers. Leaving these groves, the road climbs the side of a white chalk swell, where the ground is strewn with gravel from the huge blocks of beautiful brown flint conglomerate like agate, which runs in bands through the rock. It finally descends into a valley, open and well watered, and passes beneath the Hill of Samaria, which is thickly covered with olives.

Samaria is in a position of great strength, and though it would now be commanded from the northern range, it must, before the invention of gunpowder, have been almost impregnable. It rises some 400 feet above the valley, the sides of the hill being steep, and terraced in every direction for cultivation, or perhaps for defensive purposes, as Josephus tells us the hill was scarped by Herod the Great (Ant. xv. 8, 5); broad and open valleys stretch north and south, and the hill is thus almost isolated, being joined only by a low tongue on the east to the chain of Ebal. The view northwards extends to the high ridge a few

miles off which divides the Nâblus district from the outskirts of the great plain. On the east the lower slopes which run out of the great dome of Ebal are visible, on the south and west the flat Samaritan hills stretch away, covered with olives, and crowned by numerous villages which stand on high knolls, generally with a central tower or larger house. It is wonderful to reflect how great the antiquity of most of these hamlets is. For four thousand years, in some instances, the little hill has been covered by a succession of probably just the same sort of cottages which now rise upon the ruins of their predecessors; for four thousand years the women have gone down to the same spring, quarrelled, talked scandal, and returned with their brown jars on their heads; for four thousand years the cattle have trampled the corn and the wind has borne the chaff from the great yellow corn-heap; for all this time the same race has lived on, and has handed down the same village name, scarcely changed from the time of Abraham to the present day.

The village of Sebŭstieh, representing the ancient Samaria, is built on the brow of the great white hill, and immediately north-east of the mud-hovels are the ruins of the beautiful Crusading church of Saint John Baptist, where, in a crypt, now held sacred by the Moslem peasantry, the saint was supposed to have been beheaded. The tradition, though erroneous, is ancient, and existed

in 380 A.D. The church is a mere shell, its roof and the pillars of the nave having been destroyed.

The site of the Paradise of Samaria, mentioned in the Talmud, is perhaps represented by the spring and gardens to the south of the hill. The ancient tombs, which included those of the Kings of Israel, seem to have been situate to the north, on the opposite side of the valley, and none have as yet been discovered on the hill itself.

The most interesting ruins, however, are those of Herod's colonnade to the west of the modern village. This building seems to have run round the hill on a flat terrace, in the middle of which rises a rounded knoll on which the Temple, dedicated to Augustus, and stated by Josephus to have been in the middle of the town, presumably stood.

The cloister measures about 2100 feet east and west, and 660 feet north and south; the walk being fifty feet wide in the one case, and 100 feet in the other. The total circuit is thus some 5500 feet, but Josephus (Ant. xv. 8) estimates it at twenty furlongs or 10,000 feet; his statement is therefore considerably exaggerated, but is no doubt to be considered as conjectural only.

In the south-west angle there seems to have been a gateway flanked by small towers, the rock scarps of which remain. On the north-east there is another street of columns at the bottom of the hill, running in a line oblique to the sides of the upper colonnade. This seems to have been an

avenue of approach 180 feet wide, 1450 feet long; but it may have been a distinct building, as no pillars remain on the upper slopes.

The pillar shafts are principally monoliths; they are not, however, of colossal size like Herod's work in Jerusalem, but only sixteen feet high and two feet thick.

Samaria is not a city which can compare in antiquity with Shechem or Hebron, for only just before Ahab's time Omri bought the Hill of Shemer. In the Talmud we find it called Shomron or "watch-tower" as in the Bible, and also Sebustieh as at present, Sebaste being Herod's name for the town in honour of Augustus, to whom the Temple was dedicated. Strategical reasons may be supposed to have dictated the choice of the capital of Omri, for on the north the hill commands the main road to Jezreel over a steep pass, on the west it dominates the road to the coast, and on the east that to the Jordan through Wâdy Fâr'ah, the highway to Gilead. Thus we find that when the Syrians, under Benhadad, raised the siege, and fled by night down the great Fâr'ah valley to Jordan, their panic was due to the fear of reinforcements which they imagined they could hear advancing over the pass from the northern land of the Hittites, and on the west up the open valley from Egypt (2 Kings vii. 6).

The history of Samaria has often been sum-

marised. It shared the vicissitudes of Shechem, and was destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 129 B.C. when he demolished the Temple on Gerizim. It rose to importance under Herod, and then disappears for a time from history. It became the see of a Crusading bishop about 1155 A.D., and is mentioned by many of the Christian pilgrims. It is not, however, connected with the religion of the people like Shechem, and there is therefore comparatively little to describe in the political capital of Israel.

The traveller who rides across from Samaria behind Ebal, or who follows the stony road in the magnificent gorge east of the same mountain, finds himself gradually descending to the springs which lie at the head of the great Fâr'ah valley, the open highway from the Dâmieh ford of Jordan to Shechem. It was up this valley that Jacob drove his flocks and herds from Succoth to Shalem near Shechem. It was along the banks of its stream that the "garments and vessels" of the hosts of Benhadad were strewn as far as Jordan. It was here also that Israel, returning from captivity (according to the Samaritans), purified themselves before going up to Gerizim to build the Temple; but the place possesses a yet higher interest as the probable site of "Ænon near to Salem" where John was baptizing, "because there was much water there" (John iii. 23).

The head-springs are found in an open valley surrounded by desolate and shapeless hills. The water gushes out over a stony bed and flows rapidly down in a fine stream surrounded by bushes of oleander. The supply is perennial, and a continual succession of little springs occurs along the bed of the valley, so that the current becomes the principal western affluent of Jordan south of the Vale of Jezreel. The valley is open in most parts of its course, and we find the two requisites for the scene of baptism of a huge multitude—an open space and abundance of water.

Not only does the name of Salem occur in the village three miles south of the valley, but the name Ænon, signifying "springs," is recognisable at the village of 'Ainûn four miles north of the stream. There is only one other place of the latter name in Palestine, Beit 'Ainûn near Hebron, but this is a place which has no very fine supply of water and no Salem near it. On the other hand, there are many other Salems all over Palestine, but none of them have an Ænon near them. The site of Wâdy Fâr'ah is the only one where all the requisites are met—the two names, the fine water supply, the proximity of the desert, and the open character of the ground.

The identification has been questioned on the assumption that Ænon should be found near the desert of Judea, where John first preached (Matt. iii. 1), but it will afterwards be seen that

there is good reason for placing Bethabara, where also he baptized, far from Judea and higher up the valley of the Jordan than even this site of Ænon ; and the large area thus supposed to have been the theatre of the Baptist's wanderings fully accords with the words of the third Gospel, "He came into *all the country* about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance" (Luke iii. 3).

Here then in the wild desert valley, beneath the red precipices where the hawk and kite find nests in "the stairs of the rocks," or by the banks of the shingly stream with its beautiful oleander blossoms shining in the dusky foliage of luxuriant shrubs, we may picture the dark figure of the Baptist in his robe of camel's hair, with the broad leather Bedawi belt round his loins, preaching to the Judean multitude of pale citizens, portly grey-bearded Rabbis, Roman soldiers in leathern armour and shining helmets, sharp-faced publicans, and, above all, to the great mass of oppressed peasantry, the "beasts of the people," uncared for, stricken with palsy, with blindness, with fever, with leprosy, but eagerly looking forward to the appearance of that Messiah who came to preach the Gospel of the poor.

The scenery of Samaria differs from that both of Judea and of Galilee ; with the exception of the rugged hills south of Gerizim—the Mount Heres (or "rough mountain") of the Bible—the greater part of the district consists of chalk hills covered with olives, and of open valleys and plains which are

wonderfully fertile. The great mountain blocks of Galilee belong to the wilder ranges of Lebanon, and the long ridges of hard limestone in Judea to a class of far less picturesque scenery.

It was among these hills and valleys that the Survey was extended during the months of July and August, 1872. Starting about eight in the morning, we pushed on, now guiding our horses over the loose blocks of a dry torrent-bed, now crushing the thyme on the treeless slopes. The land was stony and colourless, dried up by the sun, the flowers long dead, and the glare from the white rock very trying; between the ledges the little owls glared out on us; the huge grey lizards lifted their tails like race-horses, scampering across the path, or nodding angrily behind a stone with a sort of mimicry of Moslem prayer-attitudes which causes them to be killed by the Mohammedans whenever caught. In the olive-groves the hoopoes were strutting with their crests lifted, on the rocks the gazelles now and then bounded past, or a stray jackal was to be seen staring from a safe distance. Herds of black long-eared goats, tended by the ragged shepherd boys, roamed over the uncultivated hills; by the springs the little red cattle, scarcely larger than an English calf, were huddled in the shade, flipping off the flies, and processions of blue-robed women came down from the dust-coloured villages to fetch back water.

The slabs of rock were slippery from the smooth feet of the huge camels which came swinging along the highway, led by men on diminutive brown donkeys. All was grey and dusty under a sky of lead in the east wind, or deep blue when it came from the west. At the villages the corn was being threshed and winnowed with instruments as old as the time of Abraham, in their peculiarities of form. Palestine was in fact at its worst as far as picturesqueness is concerned; but all was novel and strange, and the interest had scarce time to subside before the fine changes of autumn set in.

The routine gradually growing up for the execution of the work underwent but little change during the whole period of our labours. The party first rode out to various points round the camp within a radius of fifteen miles, from which good views might be expected. As each was found satisfactory, or one near it preferred, great cairns eight or ten feet high were built and whitewashed. This work took about five days. When the points were chosen, five more days were consumed in revisiting them, with the theodolite, which travelled in its box bound to the back of a mule, the muleteer perched behind it; and with it went the saddle-bags holding lunch, the chisel and hammer for cutting the broad arrow on the summits of the hills, the hatchet for hewing down trees and copses.

From two to four hours were spent at each

point fixing the position of every prominent object, tree, village, white dome or minaret visible within ten miles. The names were collected from the peasant who accompanied the party, and as the afternoon shadows began to lengthen we slowly wound down the hillside, a rough-looking cavalcade, preceded by our Bashi-bazouk in his red boots, armed to the teeth, and followed by the non-commissioned officers, who had become well accustomed to their stout little Syrian ponies, whilst the pack-mule and guide came last. We all wore revolvers and the native head-dress, the Bedawin *kufeyeh* or shawl, a sure protection from sunstroke and substitute for an umbrella. Our appearance was therefore an extraordinary compound of European and Bedawin, which is often, however, assumed by the Turkish officials in travelling, and thus attracted less attention.

On one of these rides we visited the little village of Kuriet Jît, west of Nâblus, in which there was a very high house fitted for a point in the triangulation. It was generally better to choose a mountain-top, as the curiosity of the villagers is often annoying. They were, however, here unaccustomed to travellers, and behaved with the solemn courtesy, which used to be distinctive of the peasantry before European vulgarity and European "backsheesh" had spoiled them. They stared hard at the theodolite, which was variously conjectured to be a watch, a compass, a

telescope, or a combination of all three. At noon we retired into the room which is kept especially for chance guests in every village. Here we consumed breakfast, the Sheikh and elders sitting opposite to see us feed, and afterwards invited to share the remains with our native followers. The scene in colouring was almost equal to that of



GUEST HOUSE, KURIET JIT.

Rembrandt's interiors, the bright light through the little door touching here and there the outlines of the swarthy figures in their mantles of tawny camel's-hair, striped with darker brown. The Sheikh was glad of our escort back, as he was carrying the taxes to Nâblus. He inquired, as he rode with us, how soon the English were

coming to take the country and "build it up again."

The theodolite work over, and the fixed points laid down, the filling in of the detail followed. The two non-commissioned officers divided the work between them, and I took alternate days with each to enable me to do the hill-sketching and examine the geology. In open country this riding day after day was pleasant, but when the hills were precipitous and the valleys deep and stony, the labour was very severe. Starting at eight, resting at noon, returning at sunset, and sleeping immediately after dinner, day after day sped by with wonderful rapidity, and the Survey spread gradually northwards. At length the detail was finished round Nâblus, the work penned in, the name-lists completed and the notes written up, and on the 16th of August the camp was struck early, the tents packed on grumbling camels by a crowd of yelling natives, and we formed the line of march to our new centre.

The adventures of the baggage-train were numerous; the gazelle was seized by some soldiers, who wanted it as a present to their colonel, and the usual difficulties in adjusting loads and finding the road occurred.

The horsemen went down by Samaria and crossed the steep pass over the hills north of it. From this place we looked down on a new scene,

a little brown plain, hills crowned with villages behind, and far off a long dark ridge, covered with dense copses, rising into a conical point some thirteen miles off, with a white dome on the top; this proved a most important station later on.

The district thus entered is very rich, the villages large and flourishing, with good stone houses in them, and the olives and corn very fine. It is called the "Eastern District of the Jerrâr," from the name of a famous family of native chiefs, once the governors of all the hills from the Great Plain to Nâblus on the south. The Sheikh of the village at which we camped was one of this family, and we were treated by its members with much courtesy, although this politeness may not have been altogether disinterested.

The village of Jeb'a was on the east of our camp, on a hillside, and well built of stone, with olives around it; on the north we looked across a narrow plain to Remeth of Issachar, and other ancient villages perched on heights; behind us the hills rose suddenly and stretched westwards in the long chain crossed in the morning. East of Jeb'a stands the strong fortified village of Sânûr, on an isolated hill guarding the pass into a small plain, called the "Drowned Meadow," which has no natural drainage, and thus becomes a marsh in the winter, drying up only in May or June.

This fortified village has often been supposed identical with the Bethulia of the Book of Judith,

a place which was near Dothan; but Sânûr does not fulfil one of the main requisites for the site, as it does not command a view of the Plain of Esdraelon. It is curious that the village of Mithilia, a little farther north, has been overlooked, the name of which approaches closely to that of Bethulia, whilst the plain is seen from the ridge near the village.

The head of the house of the Jerrâr lived at Sânûr, his nephew was Sheikh of Jeb'a; the younger members of the family were innumerable, and we were plagued with endless visits from them all. The Jeb'a family invited us to dinner, and we were thus able to witness a phase in peasant life not often seen by Europeans.

About six in the evening a man was sent to the camp to escort us, and we walked through the village to the highest house, that of the Sheikh. The inhabitants are wonderfully fine men, and used to be famous for their feuds with the men of 'Arrâbeh, some miles to the north; they are still redoubtable thieves, but in 1868 the Government came down on them after a riot, killed some thirty or forty, fined the village heavily, and took most of the young men for soldiers. The Sheikh's house was well built and new; the reception-room, on an upper floor, had a raised daïs, with a low wooden rail, about six inches high, on the step. It was carpeted and pillows arranged against the walls at the upper end in the corners, where

we were requested to sit. The walls were covered with plaster very brown and cracked. A gallery for sleeping was built at the lower end of the room.

The Sheikh now appeared in his white robe, with a yellow silk *kufeyeh* on his head bound with a black cord; removing his red slippers from his well-washed feet, he stepped on to the daïs, touched our hands and then his own breast, lips, and head, in token of the submissive formula, "On my heart, my mouth, and my head." The oft-repeated greetings, "How is your health?" "How is your excellency?" "your worship," "your lordship," next followed, with repetitions of the former signs, which are very gracefully executed. The host sat at a distance, or rather knelt, until pressed to come near, when he gradually approached and sunk sideways on one thigh, with his feet carefully hidden. An aged elder followed, and then the son of the host; a third and fourth dropped in, and as each appeared we rose and the same ceremonies were repeated with a dignity and decorum which made one forget for a time that we were dealing with ignorant and degraded peasants.

The Natûr, or village-watchman, and some servants now brought in a round wooden table, about a yard in diameter, on legs some six inches high; it was of rough wood, and folded down the centre. A huge brass basin followed, with a brass ewer having a long spout like a coffee-pot; the Sheikh's

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son distributed towels, and we washed our right hands preparatory to eating with them—to eat with the left hand being almost as bad a breach of manners as to show the sole of the foot. A dozen dishes were then brought in succession, taken by the young man from the servants and placed on the board; they contained lentils, tomatoes, and *kuzah*, a sort of vegetable-marrow, which were stuffed with rice; bowls of sour milk (leben), a delicious sauce to such fare, were placed between, but the centre of the table was still bare, until three huge wooden dishes of rice, piled up in cones, with fragments of boiled meat sticking out, were brought in. The most delicate dish, however, was a kid (as we then thought, but afterwards doubted whether it were not our own little gazelle which was lost soon after) dressed whole, with its head and legs still on.

As we were Europeans, the great innovation of a pewter spoon and fork was allowed, no doubt being considered as a wonderful mark of civilisation by the Sheikh; thin discs of bread, unleavened and very leathery, about a foot in diameter, were scattered on the carpet beside each guest. We were invited to draw near, but had to press our host for some time before he ventured to eat with us; finally he sat down with two more, and the son carved—that is to say, pulled the meat in pieces with his right hand, and made up little parcels wrapped in a funnel of bread for us

to eat: the liver and kidneys of the kid were placed inside the ribs and considered great delicacies; the whole fare was tender and good, but rather too oily for European palates, and the want of salt rendered it insipid. No water was placed on the board, but a servant brought it when required in a green glass; as each guest drank, his nearest neighbour turned with a bow and said, "Digestion," to which the answer is (for every formula has its proper answer), "The Lord increase your digestion," accompanied by a touching of the head with the hand.

It was evident that the party enjoyed the feast and the dignity of the proceedings, which represented in their eyes what Captain Costigan would have called "the hoight of poloite societee." The meal completed we retired to our corners, and the basin was brought again with water and soap—a necessity after using the fingers in eating. Coffee was then handed round, whilst a fresh batch of guests fell upon the feast, and was succeeded by a third, who left but little remaining. The coffee was made clear, as among the Bedawin, which is far more delicious than the thick Turkish coffee usually given to travellers. The guests drank quickly, with a loud sipping sound, the cups being about the size of an egg-cup and only half full, for to fill the cup is an intimation that the host is anxious for you to go soon, as is also the offer of a third cup soon after the second. A narghili or

hubble-bubble followed for each of us two, with pipes and cigarettes, and Drake talked, describing England, London, and the railways, while I, naturally, had to sit silent, not as yet knowing the language. The Sheikh supposed we were looking for crosses cut on the ruins, and that we should afterwards claim ownership of all such places—a belief probably originating from the crosses cut on the lintels of every ruined monastery in Crusading and Byzantine times.

About seven p.m. we retired, the host accompanying us to his door. We slipped a coin into the servant's hands, and afterwards sent a present of gunpowder to the Sheikh.

Some days later we had a repetition of this scene at Sânûr. The host, an unwieldy man in a black cloak, was yet more dignified, and the purple jackets and green waistcoats of the younger men marked them out as great dandies and local grandees. This village was so strong that it once stood several days' assault by regular troops, and only yielded on being bombarded by the Pacha. An aged elder described seeing a cannon-ball enter a room where cotton was stored, and roll the soft heap round itself. The old Sheikh, once governor of the district, declaimed bitterly against the Turks. "They rob and impoverish me," he said. "Are my women to carry wood and fetch water? Are my sons to plough the ground?" The Government were following the same policy with the

Jerrâr family which has ruined the Zeidanîyin in the north, and the Abu Ghôshin the south, and has certainly broken the national spirit, while curbing the turbulence of the factions which caused constant local outbreaks between neighbouring villages.

The most remarkable point in the behaviour of these native gentry was the reverence for age shewn even by grey-bearded men to those some ten years older. We noticed also that the religious Sheikh of the village sat above our host after the Jeb'a banquet.

On Friday, the 30th of August, we left Jeb'a and moved on to Jenîn. We were accompanied by several of the Sheikh's family, from one of whom I had purchased a little chestnut colt, which afterwards became my favourite horse; and many a long day in deserts under burning sun, or on bleak mountains in storms of snow and hail, we went through together during the three years I rode him, but hot or cold he never failed, and always kept his place at the head of the march.

The day was very tiring from the hot, dry east wind blowing, and as usual, the air showed no symptoms of ozone on the test papers, the sky was lead-coloured, and the throat became parched and dry. At dawn the beds were rolled up and the tent-sides taken down, leaving a row of huge umbrella-like tops, which in turn fell and were folded. Six camels then appeared, and their in-

dividuality was curious: the first young, white, with curly hair; the second reddish; the third so thin it seemed suffering from atrophy; the fourth with a huge head, bulky and short-legged; the fifth tall and graceful, of ochre colour, its head ornamented with bells and long-tufted tassels, evidently a favourite; the sixth aged, blear-eyed, its lower lip dropping, so as to show all its long yellow teeth. Each in turn knelt, and as it was loaded it groaned and brayed, and snarled, and bubbled, sometimes twisting its head round and biting viciously. Of all animals the camel is most stupid and disagreeable. It is sulky and revengeful, slow, and yet easily panic-stricken, when it will stampede with its load dragging on the ground. It never seems happy or playful, and receives caresses and food with the same grumbling noise which it makes when loaded. It is very weak in the hind legs, and carries very little for its size. It resembles, in fact, the peasant it serves, and one would imagine the language of the two to have a common origin.

Each camel was loaded and kicked till it struggled up and went off to browse on the olive-trees; when all were ready and tied in a string, they filed down the chalky road, followed soon by six mules. The horsemen then set off, but the poor gazelle was nowhere to be found. After the Europeans came our head man, Habib, in his gay blue hussar jacket, yellow *kufeyeh*, and dark

green Turkish trousers, with English knee-boots; the second man in a red jacket and green waistcoat, with blue trousers; the soldier in black, with a pink head-dress; the bandy-legged Egyptian groom leading my colt; finally, the cook on a donkey, with an old handkerchief on his head—a motley group, with the Sheikhs riding alongside in white cloaks, tucked under their knees and swelling out in the breeze till they looked from behind like balloons on horseback.

By noon we reached Dothan, the scene of Joseph's betrayal by his brethren, and halted under a spreading fig-tree beside a long cactus hedge. Just north of us was the well called Bîr el Hŭfîreh, "Well of the Pit," and east of us a second, with a water-trough, thus accounting for the name Dothan, "two wells." Above the wells on the north rises the shapeless mound where the town once stood, and on the west spread the dark brown plain of 'Arrâbeh, across which runs the main Egyptian road—the road by which the armies of Thothmes and Necho came up from the sea-coast, and by which the Midianite merchants went down with their captive. The cattle stood by the well, huddling in the shade, waiting to be watered, and rude cowherds and goatherds gathered around us in groups which were no doubt not far different in dress or language from Joseph's brethren four thousand years ago.

The heat was so intense that the poor terriers

were knocked up, and had to be hoisted for a ride. By the time of afternoon prayer we reached the pleasant camping-ground of Jenîn, and thus passed out of Samaria into the plains of Lower Galilee.

One place of interest must be noticed in concluding this chapter—Tirzah, once the capital of Israel, famous for its beauty.

It is the only Samaritan town mentioned among the royal cities taken by Joshua, and even this name was changed by the Rabbinical writers into Tiran, a place in Galilee.

Just twelve miles east of our Jeb'a camp, on a plateau where the valleys begin to dip suddenly towards Jordan, stands the mud hamlet of Teiâsîr. We afterwards visited it from the Jordan camp, and found it to have been once a place of importance, judging from the numerous rock-cut sepulchres burrowing under the houses, the fertile lands and fine olives round, and the monument of good masonry, seemingly a Roman tomb. Just north of it we discovered a ruin called Ibzîk, which is unquestionably a Bezek known to Eusebius, and probably the place where Saul collected his army before attacking the Ammonites (1 Sam. xi. 8).

In the latter ruin is a little chapel dedicated to Neby Hazkîn, "the Prophet Ezekiel," and the high mountain crowned with thicket behind is called "Ezekiel's Mountain."

This name Teiâsîr I suppose to be Tirzah. It contains the exact letters of the Hebrew word,

though the two last radicals are interchanged in position, a kind of change not unusual among the peasantry. The beauty of the position and the richness of the plain on the west, the ancient remains, and the old main road to the place from Shechem, seem to agree well with the idea of its having once been a capital; and if I am right in the suggestion, then the old sepulchres are probably, some of them, those of the early kings of Israel before the royal family began to be buried in Samaria.





View from Jenin.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GREAT PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.

Our new camp was fixed at Jenîn, the ancient Engannim or "Spring of Gardens," at the southern extremity of the Great Plain, a border city of Galilee according to Josephus, now a picturesque town of three thousand inhabitants, with a bazaar and a mosque, surrounded by groves of olives, through which a little stream finds its way in spring. Our camp was west of the place, and looked out on the white mosque of 'Azz ed Dîn with its minaret, the great threshing-floor with its heaps of yellow grain, the beautiful gardens of

palms, oranges, and tamarisks set in cactus hedges, while behind, on the east, was the stony range of Gilboa, on the north the brown plain, the blue Nazareth hills, the volcanic cone of Jebel Dŭhy, and the shoulder of Carmel towards the west.

The Great Plain extends northwards fourteen miles from Jenîn, to Junjâr at the foot of the Nazareth chain, whilst from Jezreel on the east, to Legio on the west, is about nine miles. The elevation is about 200 to 250 feet above the sea, and a Y-shaped double range of hills bounds it east and west, with an average elevation of 1500 feet above the plain. On the north-east are the two detached blocks of Neby Dŭhy and Tabor, and on the north-west a narrow gorge is formed by the river Kishon, which springs from beneath Tabor and collecting the whole drainage of this large basin, passes from the Great Plain to that of Acre. On the east of the plain the broad valley of Jezreel gradually slopes down towards Jordan, and Jezreel itself (the modern Zer'in) stands on the side of Gilboa above it. On the west are the scarcely less famous sites of Legio, Taanach, and Jokneam, while the picturesque conical hill of Duhy, just north of the Jezreel valley, has Shunem on its south slope, and Nain and Endor on the north. Thus seven places of interest lie at the foot of the hills east and west, but no important town was ever situate in the plain itself,—a flat expanse of arable land,

the loose basaltic soil of which is extremely fertile.

The Great Plain was once the favourite resort of the Bedawin when driven by war or famine across Jordan. At times it used to be covered with camels "like the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable." The Ruwalla (a branch of the great Arab nation called 'Anazeh), the Sukr and other important tribes came over to pasture their camels, and like the Midianites whom Gideon encountered advancing by the same great highway—the valley of Jezreel, they oppressed the native population settled in the villages. Thus in 1870 only about a sixth of the beautiful corn-land was tilled, and the plain was black with Arab "houses of hair." But the Turks wrought a great and sudden change; they armed their cavalry with the Remington breech-loading rifle, and the Bedawin disappeared as though by magic. It was of course to be expected that when external troubles had weakened the Government, the lawless nomads would again encroach and levy toll and tribute as before; for the history of Palestine seems constantly to repeat itself from the earliest period recorded, in a recurring struggle between the settled population and the nomads, Midianites, Canaanites, Bedawin, or whatever other name you may call them; thus during the year 1877 Fendi el Fais and the Sukr have again invaded the plain, and levied black-mail on the luckless peasantry.

In 1872 no less than nine-tenths of the plain was cultivated, nearly half with corn, the rest with millet, sesame, cotton, tobacco, and the castor-oil plant. The springs on the west are copious; from near Legio a considerable affluent flows north to join the Kishon, and even in August the streams are running to waste at the foot of the hills. The Great Plain is indeed one of the richest natural fields of cultivation in Palestine—perhaps one might say in the world.

The night came down on our newly-erected camp before even a hasty glance could be obtained of all this interesting scenery. There is something peculiarly soothing in the Syrian starlight; the planets are brighter than in the north, the milky way looks like a long white cloud, the moon, as she rises, is often accompanied by a silvery vapour floating over the mountain-tops. The silence is broken by the sigh of the night wind among the olives which form a black lattice-work overhead. In the village at intervals one hears the barking of the troops of savage dogs, and in the open plain the shrill gamut of the jackals, rising note by note, and ending in a sort of shake or quavering sound. The cicalas are asleep, but the piping of the black mole-crickets continues all night. Occasionally a horse wakes with a snort, or the English terriers hear a strange step and give the short sharp warning bark, so different from the mongrel howls of the native

dogs; then once more all is still but the wind, and the silence becomes almost oppressive.

The Great Plain was the place chosen for the measurement of our second base to check the accuracy of the triangulation carried up some sixty miles from its starting-point in the Jaffa plain. On the 2nd of September we laid out the line for a distance of four and a half miles, directing it on the white dome of Neby S'ain above Nazareth, and thus obtaining a prolongation for calculation of nearly six miles. The high hills east and west gave us a second line of fifteen miles almost at right angles, and from this, large well-shaped triangles were carried away to the north. The check was perfectly satisfactory, and the closing line, when calculated in 1876 at Southampton, had a margin of only twenty feet, which is an invisible distance on the one inch scale.

It was, however, whilst assisting in this arduous undertaking that Mr. Drake laid the foundation of the disease which finally took him from us. The south end of the base was marked by a platform of huge blocks of stone, and in helping to move these he appeared to give his side a strain which brought on enlargement of the liver, and finally the acute inflammation which caused his death. The danger was seen early, and explained to us by Dr. Chaplin; but poor Drake's devotion to our work was greater than his delicate health would permit, and thus our first success was

also the commencement of our future troubles. The labour of walking over the loose basaltic soil, which seemed to scorch the soles of one's boots, under a noonday sun whose power was unbroken by any friendly tree or cloud, was such as I shall never forget, and more severe than anything, with exception of the desert and Jordan work, in the following years. The skin of my nose came quite off, and the soreness was most painful. The mirage was also very annoying in observing, the air flickering like that above a limekiln, and making objects, some four miles distant, often indistinguishable. The cairn at the end of the base seemed at times to be perched on the slope of the hills beyond, and ripples occasionally appeared in the haze as though in water, whilst the camels, with legs of impossible length, seemed to stoop and drink. In the following year I saw the mirage yet more marked on the Sharon Plain, where the groups of palms and the cactus hedges appeared to grow on the brink of white lakes in which they were partly reflected, a delusion gradually shifting as the traveller approaches, and finds nothing but red sand and dry hedges.

A camp of militia was established at the village, their tents spread in a flat dusty plot near the barracks. There were some three hundred infantry, in white jackets, white baggy trousers, and red fezzes, crowded eight in a tent with 107° F. in the shade. They were drawn up in line without being

sized, and the Colonel was to be seen addressing them, the men replying by a sort of hum. On another day we saw them marching in fours, not in step, but in very good time to the music. An officer in a black frock-coat, with the tails to his heels, was swaggering in front, cane in hand. On the drill-ground the awkward squads were being instructed, by sergeants in blue shell-jackets with enormous red badges, white trousers, and gaiters, and the military fezz, which is bright vermilion in colour. The men wore beards, and handled their long guns very awkwardly, each repeating the caution in a loud voice as he went through the motions very much in his own time. They seemed, however, to satisfy the instructor, whose views were perhaps less strict than those of a Guards sergeant; but I noticed that the opinion of the majority had apparently no influence on about one man in ten, who was marked out by the originality of his rendering of the general idea conveyed by the sergeant.

One of our trigonometrical stations was placed on a high hill above the smaller plain of 'Arrâbeh in which Dothan stands just south-west of the Great Plain. Here there is a chapel dedicated to Sheikh Shibleh a famous Emir, who in 1697 waylaid the traveller Maundrell. This writer remarks drily that after extorting black-mail, "he eased us in a very courteous manner of some of our coats, which now began to grow not only super-

fluous but burdensome." The Emir died, and was canonised, and his tomb looks down from the stony hill-top on the scene of his former prowess; but he is not the only sainted bandit in the Syrian pantheon.

In returning from this ride we passed through the little Christian village of Burkîn, where we were hailed with a pleasure very different from the hollow courtesy of the Moslem natives. The old Khûri or curé hastened down to show us his church on the hillside, a small whitewashed room, with a stone screen on the east shutting off the apses, as in all Greek churches in the country, and with three entrances guarded by curtains. The silver plate and ewer were kept in the north apse, the altar stood in the central one; the church was very rudely built, about fifty feet square, with a dome some twenty feet high. Two stone lecterns held the books near the screen, and a stone chair on the south side had arms with rude dogs' heads carved on them. The pictures were all painted on wood in a stiff pre-Raffaelite style, with gaudy colouring dimmed by age. One represented the ascent of Elijah in a chariot with a red cloud beneath, and four winged horses harnessed to it, with traces looking like white tapes attached to the spokes of the wheels. Elisha below receives the mantle, and is again represented as at a greater distance striking Jordan with it, whilst a group of sons of the prophets stand like

a shock of corn in a square block with gilded glories on their heads. Other pictures represented St. George, the Virgin, the Baptist with red wings and a title in Russian and Arabic characters, St. Nicholas, and the Saviour enthroned.

The Khûri was a native, and his robes could not well have been dirtier or shabbier. He was accompanied by two acolytes who held our horses; his pride and satisfaction in showing his church were immense.

Whilst at Jenîn we had the unusual honour of a visit from a lady, who came to ask for medical advice. Peasants suffering from ophthalmia, or from indigestion, which they explained by saying "the head of my heart hurts me," we had to doctor every day, and one poor old gentleman, at Mujeidil, we afterwards treated with carbolic acid and nearly cured of a skin disease; but he had many other ailments which we could not treat, and he consequently became a decided nuisance. The lady came attended by her slave, a little girl in white with huge dark eyes, one of which, for same unknown reason, she kept steadily shut. The mistress was dressed in yellow and white striped cotton, with the izâr or white veil above; her face-veil she was obliged to remove to show her tongue, and her eyes had a deep fringe of blue kohel all round, the eyebrows painted to meet, whilst on her chin, forehead, and upper lip, were small dots tattooed in blue in a sort of trefoil

pattern; her hands had bands of blue paint and dots on the knuckles. She wore heavy rings and a blue glass bracelet; the sleeves were tight to the wrist, and under her frock she wore the gay-coloured trousers as we call them, which are in reality a petticoat sewn up, and the prettiest article of Syrian costume. Her nails and the palms of her hands were dyed orange colour with henna, and on her feet she wore the red curly-toed slippers used in walking out of doors. She described her symptoms with the usual high querulous tone and rapid chatter peculiar to the native women, and was made happy by a couple of pills.

On Sunday afternoon we had to entertain four German students, who were walking through the Holy Land. They had heard we had a house in Jenîn and came to ask hospitality. The conversation was in Italian, German, Arabic, Latin, and French, all of which languages they and we spoke ill. We gave them shelter for the night, but Sergeant Black must have come off badly, for they eat up his dinner, and his breakfast, it afterwards appeared, was devoured by the rascally guide who accompanied him in his long day's work.

The places visited from this camp lay principally east of the plain. We ascended the high conical peak of Jebel Dŭhy, so-called after Neby Dŭhy ("the leader or general"), a prophet whose sacred place is on the summit. Who this prophet was I

am unable to say, nor can we with any certainty apply a Biblical name to the mountain. The Crusaders called it sometimes Mount Endor, and generally Little Hermon, a title still known to the Nazareth Christians. The latter name was given in consequence of the expression, "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name," whence they seem to have argued that Hermon was to be sought close to Tabor. They can never have looked northwards from the neighbourhood of Endor, or they would have seen the rounded, isolated mound, like a huge mole-hill, which is Tabor, and behind it far away the magnificent, snowy dome of the second sacred mountain of the text—the true Hermon.

Some excitement was caused in the little village near the top of the hill by the sight of "pagans" standing on the sacred dome of Neby Dŭhy; but the old custodian was quite reconciled by finding we had removed our boots, had asked permission of the prophet himself, and had actually brought a can of whitewash, with which we whitened the entire dome—for survey purposes, or out of respect to the prophet, as I believe he was led to suppose.

The top of the mountain is composed of blocks of basalt, covered with grey lichen. The view is magnificent, extending from the Safed ranges on the north to Mount Ebal on the south, and from the peaks east of the great Hauran plateau to Carmel and the sea. Fifteen hundred feet below us



TABOR.

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is Nain, and north of this the plain in which the mediæval tradition supposed Abraham to have met Melchisedek, with the unique outline of Tabor, the Nazareth block, and distant Hermon. On the south side the broad valley of Jezreel is just below, and the villages of Kûmieh and Shŭtta, seen almost in bird's-eye view on their little knolls surrounded by long patches of arable land, whilst on the south side of the valley the limestone of the Gilboa ridge is twisted into wavy lines by the eruptive basalt beneath, and the range is seen, end on as it were, rising shelf above shelf, while conspicuous on its knoll of rugged rock, Jezreel stands at the north-west horn of the crescent-shaped range, 500 feet above the bright pool of "Goliath's Spring," where the early Christians, by some curious misconception, imagined David to have fought the giant. On a clear autumn day the little Survey cairn was plainly visible on Mount Ebal at a distance of twenty-six miles. The prospect is indeed one of the finest in Palestine, with a variety of outline and extent of view rarely to be found.

The village of Nain lies below on a sort of spur to the north of Neby Dŭhy, and the road from Nazareth ascends in a hollow to the west of it. On the right of the road, yet farther west, are the rock-cut tombs, and thus the procession bearing the young man's body would have come down the slope towards the little

spring westwards, meeting our Lord on the main road. The mud-hovels on the grey tongue of limestone have no great marks of antiquity, but the surrounding ruins show the village to have been once larger, and a little mosque called "the Place of our Lord Jesus" marks, no doubt, the site of an early chapel. There are, as far as we could see, no traces of a wall, and I think we should understand by "gate of the city," the place where the road enters among the houses, just as the word is used often in Greek, and in modern Arabic in such expressions as "gate of the pass," "gate of the valley," and even "gate of the city," where no wall or gate exists.

East of Nain is a second similar village of mud-huts, with hedges of prickly pear. This is Endor, famous in connection with the tragic history of the death of Saul. The adventurous character of Saul's night journey is very striking, when we consider that the Philistines pitched in Shunem on the southern slopes of the mountain, and that Saul's army was at Jezreel; thus, to arrive at Endor, he had to pass the hostile camp, and would probably creep round the eastern shoulder of the hill, hidden by the undulations of the plain, as an Arab will now often advance unseen close by you in a fold of the ground. We are accustomed, probably from the various pictures of the scene, to think of the witch as living in a cave; and caves exist at Endor, but they are small, and seem

to be probably modern, having been dug out in seeking for the marl used in making mortar. The hillside is bare and stony, with a low ledge of rock in which the rude entrances are cut; round one cave there is a curious circle of boulders, which form a sort of protection, and resemble somewhat a druidical circle, though the formation is probably natural. This cave would, however, offer an appropriate scene for the meeting of the sorceress with the unhappy king, whom God answered "neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets" (1 Sam. xxviii. 6).

On the southern slope stands a third and similar village called Sûlem, the ancient Shunem. There is nothing specially to mark it as an ancient site, for it is only a mud-hamlet, with cactus hedges and a spring, yet it is undoubtedly the place known in the fourth century as Shunem. West of the houses there is a beautiful garden, cool and shady, of lemon-trees, watered by a little rivulet, and in the village is a fountain and trough. Westward the view includes Fûleh—the Crusading Castle of the Bean, with its fosse and marshy pool outside, and extends as far as Carmel, fifteen miles away. Thus the whole extent of the ride of the Shunamite woman (2 Kings iv. 24) under the burning noontide sun of harvest-time is visible. Were the houses of that time no larger than the mud-cabins of the modern village, it was not a great architectural undertaking to build "a little chamber"

for the prophet, and the enumeration of the simple furniture of that chamber—the bed, perhaps only a straw mat, the table, the stool, and the lamp, seems to indicate that it was only such a little hut that was intended. Another point may be noted: how came it that Elisha so constantly passed by Shunem? The answer seems simple; he lived habitually on Carmel, but he was a native of Abel Meholah, "the Meadow of Circles," a place now called 'Ain Helweh, in the Jordan valley, to which the direct road led past Shunem down the Valley of Jezreel.

Crossing the valley, we see before us the site of Jezreel on a knoll 500 feet high. The position is very peculiar, for whilst on the north and north-east the slopes are steep and rugged, on the south the ascent is very gradual, and the traveller coming northwards is astonished to look down suddenly on the valley, with its two springs, one ('Ain Jâlûd) welling out from a conglomerate cliff, and forming a pool about 100 yards long, with muddy borders; the other ('Ain Tub'aûn), the Crusaders Fountain of Tubania, where the Christian armies were fed "miraculously" for three days on the fish which still swarm in most of the great springs near.

The main road ascends from near these springs and passes by the "Dead Spring," which was re-opened by the Governor of Jenîn, and now forms a shallow pool between rocks of black basalt,

covered with red and orange-coloured lichen, and also full of little fish; thence it passes on the east side beneath the knoll of Zer'în (Jezreel) to the plain on the south. Climbing up to the village, we are again struck by the absence of any traces of antiquity; the buildings, including the central tower, are all modern, and only the great mound beneath, and perhaps some of the innumerable cisterns, seem ancient; yet the site is undoubted, and has never been really lost. Here from a tower, perhaps standing where the modern one is erected, the watchman could see down the broad Valley of Jezreel as far as Bethshan, and watch the dust and the gleam of the armour advancing. The course of the two horsemen and of Jehu's chariot was distinctly seen beneath the hill, and the distances are sufficiently extensive to give time for the succession of events.

On the east and south-east there are rock-cut wine-presses on the rugged hills, where no doubt the "portion of the field of Naboth" and his vine-yard are to be placed,—a good instance of the decay of vine cultivation in Palestine.

It was by the "fountain which is in Jezreel" that Saul pitched before the fatal battle of Gilboa. The Philistines removed from Shunem to Aphek, and, according to Josephus, to Rangan. Perhaps these are the modern Fukû'a and 'Arrâneh, in which case the strong position of Jezreel was turned on the south-west, where it is most assail-

able, and the doomed monarch was hemmed in between the enemy on the south and the precipices of the mountain on the north.

On the 28th of September we left the Jenîn camp, where we suffered from the east wind and the great heat, to find a retreat in the western hills above the Great Plain, at the modern village of Umm el Fahm..

It was a day of misfortunes; the weather was fearfully hot, with a strong east wind, and the dogs had suffered so much in the last move, that we determined they should ride; Jack and Jill were accordingly put in a pair of nose-bags, one each side of a mule, with their heads sticking out, and the other two were carried on the saddle. After about a mile Jack and Jill fell out, and all four had then to sit in a row. A mule ran away and his load came off, including a theodolite; he was chased for nearly half an hour; a second, frightened by the galloping of our Bashi-bazouk ran away, and fell under its load, including a delicate chronometer. Then the head man Habîb was seized with one of those hysterical fits of passion from which all Syrians suffer, and rode after his own mule with a gun to shoot it. Then Jack refused to ride, and got kicked by a mule and was laid for dead in the road.

After luncheon things got better, but we suffered intensely all day from prickly heat, and from the huge thistles ten to fifteen feet high beside the

roads. The camping-ground by a spring in an olive-yard proved very pleasant, but one of the camels broke down on the road, and the mules had to be sent back to bring up his load. Two days later I left the camp for a few days in order to visit Jerusalem, and rode thither alone from Nâblus, arriving after dark. On my return Dr. Chaplin kindly came down to see Drake, who was now suffering from his liver, and we reached the tents once more on the 10th of October, and visited the country round and the interesting site of Legio (now called Lejjûn) in the plain beneath.

The large and flourishing stone village above us was built within the present century, and is called Umm el Fahm, "Mother of Charcoal." It is perched on the slope of a high, conical, wooded hill, called from the little chapel on the top Sheikh Iskander, or "Chief Alexander." The Kadi of the village, an amusing little native, who could read and write, told us many legends of this saint. He was identified apparently with Alexander the Great, for he was said to have had two ram's horns, and also seemingly with Melchisedek, as he was reported to have had a meeting with Abraham in the valley.

This district was almost entirely unknown in 1872; the cone is a volcanic crater, and small volcanic outbreaks exist west of it, and also at the edge of the Great Plain on the east. The range is covered with thickets of lentisk and spurge laurel,

and on the western slopes is an open wood of good-sized oaks; but on the north a broad valley called Wâdy 'Arah, divides this range from a plateau of white chalk called "the Breezy Land" (Belâd er Rûhah), bare of trees and reaching to Carmel. The thickets of Sheikh Iskander reach southwards almost to the plain of Dothan; the Yahmûr or roebuck gives its name to one of the valleys in this region, and every kind of game abounds.

On the western edge of the Great Plain there are three famous sites, Taanach, Legio, and Jokneam, concerning which a few words may be said.

The ruined site of Lejjûn is the Roman Legio, a town mentioned as a military station, and an important place in the fourth century. On the maps it will be found marked as the ancient Megiddo, but this is only an instance of the very slender basis on which conclusions as to the positions of important places in Palestine have been somehow founded. There is nothing definite in the Bible as to the position of Megiddo. It is often mentioned with Taanach, the site of which, with its name unchanged, exists about four miles south of Lejjûn; but it also occurs in connection with Jezreel, and with Bethshean, east of the Great Plain. In the time of Jerome Megiddo was unknown, though the Great Plain was apparently then supposed to be the Valley of Megid-

don. Dr. Robinson, in suggesting the Lejjûn site, appears to have been influenced by the Crusading chronicles, which he, as a rule, condemns. Marino Sanuto, in 1321 A.D., places Megiddo at a town which he calls Sububa, and shows it on his map as on the west side of the plain. This is evidently the present Ezbûba, a mud village two miles north of Taanach, and three miles and a quarter south-east of Lejjûn. But Crusading topography is unfortunately more remarkable than reliable, and we seek in vain for further confirmation. Dr. Robinson has relied on Jerome's comment on a passage in Zechariah (xii. 11), "As the mourning of Hadad Rimmon in the Valley of Megiddon," concerning which St. Jerome says that Hadad Rimmon was a town afterwards called Maximianopolis in the Valley of Megiddon; and this place we learn from the Bordeaux Pilgrim was ten miles from Jezreel on the road to Cæsarea. This distance evidently points to Rummâneh south of Lejjûn, seven and a quarter English miles from Jezreel. But we are still no nearer to the satisfactory fixing of Megiddo, for we have to depend on Jerome, first for the fact of Hadad Rimmon being a town at all (a fact disputed by many authorities who make it the name of an idol); secondly, for the town, if it was one, being the same as Maximianopolis. Supposing these premises both to be granted, it still does not follow that the town Megiddo was west of the Plain of

Megiddo; nor, if it were, does it follow that it was at Lejjûn.

Such is the flimsy chain of argument which has been considered sufficient to fix the site. When we discover that there is a large ruin between Jezreel and Bethshean, which still bears the name Mujedd'a, a name which occurs in no other part of Palestine, these arguments cannot be considered worth weighing against so important an indication; and the new site, as will afterwards be seen, seems to fit far better the few requirements for the ancient Megiddo.

Lejjûn was indeed once a large town, with a fine water supply from a beautiful spring, but Legio appears to have been the chief town of this part of Palestine, and to it the ruins are plainly to be ascribed, the distance from Taanach fitting with that given by Jerome.

North of Lejjûn the Great Wâdy el Milh runs down from the white plateau of the "Breezy Land," which it separates from the southern end of Carmel. Here at the mouth stands a huge Tell or mound called Keimûn, on which are remains of a little Byzantine chapel, and of a small fort, erected by the famous native chief Dhahr el 'Amr. The Samaritans have a curious legend connected with this site. According to them Joshua was challenged by the giants, and enclosed here with his army in seven walls of iron. A dove carried his message thence to Nabih, king of the tribes east

of Jordan, who came to his assistance. The magic walls fell down, and the King of Persia, Shobek, was transfixed by an arrow which nailed him on his horse to the ground.

The present name is a slight modification of the ancient Jokneam of Carmel, but the Crusaders seem to have been puzzled by it, and transformed Keimûn into Cain Mons, or Mount Cain, whence arose the curious legend that Cain was here slain with an arrow by Lamech, which they supposed to be the murder referred to in the Song of Lamech (Gen. iv. 23). The chapel no doubt shows the spot once held to be the site of the death of Cain, but the derivation of the name was as fanciful as that of Haifa from Cephas or from Caiaphas the high-priest.

From our pleasant camp at Umm el Fahm, where are no less than twenty springs within the village lands, and fine gardens of oranges, lemons, and huge shaddocks, we marched north-west to the town of Mujeidil in the Nazareth hills. On this day (the 19th of October) we crossed the Kishon and found by experience how treacherous are the banks of this apparently insignificant stream. The subject which naturally concludes the account of the Plain, is therefore the great battle in which the host of Sisera was drowned in the swollen waters of this river.

The amount of light which can now be thrown on this episode is very great. The topography

has hitherto been obscure, but the Survey does much to explain it. To suppose that Sisera fled from the Great Plain to the neighbourhood of Kedes in Upper Galilee (a distance of over thirty miles) has always appeared to me to be contrary to what we know of the general character of the Biblical stories, the scenes of which are always laid in a very confined area; nor has the name of the plain, Bitzaanaim, near Kedesh, been recovered in this direction. Bitzaanaim was a town of Issachar near Adami (Ed Dâmieh) and should therefore be sought east of Tabor in the plateau over the sea of Galilee, where we still find it in the modern Bessûm. The Kedesh of the narrative where Barak assembled his troops is therefore probably Kedîsh on the shore of the sea of Galilee, only twelve miles from Tabor. There is thus, from a military point of view, a consistency in the advance to Tabor (a strong position in the line by which the enemy were approaching), which is lacking if we suppose a descent from the stronger hills of Upper Galilee. The Kings of Canaan assembled in Taanach and by the waters of Megiddo, but it was not at either of these places that the battle was fought. Sisera was drawn to the river Kishon (Judges iv. 7), and the host perished near Endor, "at the brook Kishon" (Psalm lxxxiii. 10). The battle-field indeed was almost identical with that from which Napoleon named the "battle of Mount Tabor," when the

French drove the Turks into that same treacherous quagmire of the Kishon springs.

There are few episodes in the Old Testament more picturesque than this of the defeat of the Canaanites. Tabor, the central position, a mountain whose summit is 1500 feet above the plain, is bare and shapeless on the south, but to the north it is steep, and wooded with oaks and thickets in which the fallow-deer finds a home. About three miles west are the springs from which the Kishon first rises, and from this point a chain of pools and springs, fringed with reeds and rushes, marks, even in the dry season, the course of the river. Along this line, at the base of the northern hills, the chariots and horsemen of Sisera fled. The sudden storm had swollen the stream, "the river Kishon swept them away, that river of battles the river Kishon." The remainder fled to Harosheth, now only a miserable village (El Harathîyeh), named from the beautiful woods above the Kishon at the point where, through a narrow gorge, the stream, hidden among oleander bushes, enters the Plain of Acre.

The flight of Sisera himself was in an opposite direction, under the slopes of Tabor and across the great lava plateau on which stood, near Bessûm, the black tent of Heber the Kenite. The two incidents in the tragedy of his murder by Jael, which most require illustration, are the "milk" and "butter" with which she regaled her victim,

and the reasons which, in her eyes, justified the deed.

The Bedawin have a delicious preparation of curdled milk called Leben, which is offered to guests but generally considered a delicacy; from personal experience I know that it is most refreshing to a traveller when tired and hot, but it has also a strange soporific effect, which was so sudden in its action on one English clergyman after a long ride, that he thought he had been poisoned. It was perhaps not without a knowledge of its probable effects, that Jael gave to her exhausted guest a tempting beverage which would make his sleep sound and long.

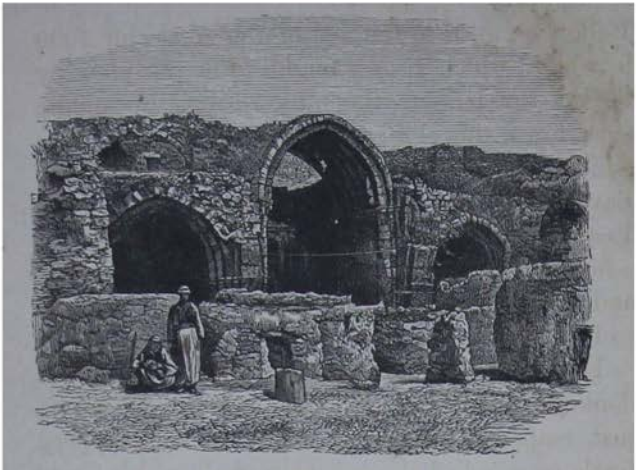
The murder of a fugitive and a guest is so contrary to the morality of the Semitic nomads, that we must seek for a very strong justification. It could not have been national enthusiasm which actuated Jael, for she was a Kenite, not a Jewess, one of a nation hostile to Israel, and there "was peace between Jabin King of Hazor (Sisera's master) and the house of Heber the Kenite." The true reason is probably to be sought in Sisera's entering the tent at all. There are instances in later history in which a defeated Arab has sheltered himself in the women's apartments, but such an infringement of Eastern etiquette has always been punished by death; and it is not improbable that in revenge for such an insult Jael seized the iron tent-peg and drove it with the

mallet, used to fix the tents to the ground, through Sisera's brain.

One final illustration may be added, suggested to me quite lately by an English clergyman. In the magnificent song of Deborah, the great storm which swelled the Kishon is described :

"They fought from heaven, the stars from their courses fought against Sisera" (Judg. v. 20).

The season was probably that of the autumn storms which occur early in November. At this time the meteoric showers are commonest, and are remarkably fine in effect, seen in the evening light at a season when the air is specially clear and bright. The scene presented by the falling fiery stars, as the defeated host fled away by night, is one very striking to the fancy, and which would form a fine subject for an artist's pencil.



CHURCH OF ST. ANNE, SEPPHORIS.

CHAPTER V.

THE NAZARETH HILLS.

FOR ten days we had been encamped at Jenîn, with our faces towards the distant block of hills where, beneath the white and gleaming chapel of Neby S'aîn, Nazareth lay hidden in its mountain vale. At length, on the 10th of September, we were able to leave the camp for a day, and, in company with Drake, I cantered over the plain in the early morning and arrived at the city in four hours' riding, the distance being seventeen miles.

Past Gilboa, Jezreel, Shunem, Nain, and

Endor, we sped to the foot of the great cliff 1000 feet high, which rises straight from the plain by the narrow pass to the hills. From the middle ages down, this cliff has been shown as that from which the Nazarenes would have precipitated the Saviour. Old Maundeville quaintly terms it "the Leap of our Lord," and other pilgrims were shown a hollow where the rock had become soft as wax, and formed a hiding-place where Christ was said to have been concealed.

Up the pass a long train of camels and of black donkeys toiled, laden with the rich crop of sesame just reaped. Ascending the steep and slippery track, we reached the soft white chalk which forms the upper portion of the range, and which produces all round Nazareth a neighbourhood of bare, white, rolling hills, quite distinct from the bold mountains of Upper Galilee and from the oak-clad downs near Carmel. Here in the valley which we were following is a beautiful garden or orchard; oranges, figs, nuts, lemons, and pomegranates grow beside a spring, the rich green contrasting with the glaring white of the chalk and the brown of the burnt grass between the ledges. Still riding north-east a busy scene greeted our eyes—a huge threshing-floor, on which horses and cows were being driven round, some dragging the rude threshing-sledge, some trampling only with their feet, while great cones of corn were being winnowed with a fork. Here we turned a corner, and

suddenly all Nazareth was before us, gleaming white and new-looking on the side of the hill.

The position of the village is secluded, and it is only visible from its immediate neighbourhood. The range of hills runs north-east, and the south slopes are steep; a valley comes down westward on this side, and then gradually burrows south to its mouth, at the pass by which we had come up. At the point where it turns an open dell or hollow plateau is formed, where are the gardens of Nazareth—a sort of little mountain-plain, shelving down southwards. On it stand the Greek Church of the Annunciation and the Virgin's Fountain; the town itself climbs up from it westwards, and hangs on the side of the steep hill, on the summit of which is the Moslem Chapel of Neby S'aîn. The total extent of the village or town is only about a quarter of a mile either way, but the houses stand close together, so that in this small area a population of nearly 6000 souls is crowded, of whom one third only are Moslem.

Very characteristic of the history of the Holy Land it is to find within so small an area the sacred places of no less than six sects. The most ancient building is the Latin Church over the Holy House, in the strong monastery with its shady garden and palms. North of it the graceful minaret and the dark cypresses of the mosque rise close to the Governor's house. On the west, yet higher up the hill, white and new stands the Gothic

tower of the English Church; still farther west is the Maronite chapel. In the main street by the market the Greek Catholics hold possession of the chapel where they believe the synagogue of Nazareth once to have stood; high above the town on the north a large orphanage, built by German labour with English money, has been erected by the Society for Female Education in the East. Farther east is the palace of the Greek bishop, and above the fountain is the church (also on the foundations of a building mentioned as early as 700 A.D.) where the Greeks hold the Salutation of Mary to have occurred beside the springhead beneath the hill.

Thus we see at a glance how the little town is the centre of Christian love and veneration, and the goal to which men's thoughts have been attracted from the west, from the north, from the east, and from the south, from civilised Europe, from rough but believing Russia, from the hills of Lebanon, even from the plains of Mecca.

Twenty years ago Nazareth was a poor village, now it is a flourishing town. The freedom given to religious worship by the Turks has been indeed remarkable compared with the tyranny of Arab or Egyptian governors; thus two Latin Churches, a Latin Hospice, the English Church, and many fine houses have been built within the last dozen years or so, and hence the very white and new

appearance of the town of which they are the most prominent buildings.

Past the fortress convent, where a monk was alighting from a richly-caparisoned horse, up the narrow lanes, between the little hovels of the older part of the town, up rubbish-heaps, and over slippery cobbles, we rode to the parsonage, and were hospitably entertained by Mr. Zeller, the clergyman. The next day we returned early, and thus a more intimate acquaintance with the town was reserved until later, when I spent nearly three weeks in the Latin Hospice, and again visited the city twice for a few days in 1875.

Nazareth is probably not a very ancient place, for it is not noticed in the Old Testament, though situated very near the boundary of Zebulun; nor was it probably ever a very large town, for it has but one spring. Its name is most likely derived from the colour of the hills around, and may mean "white," though the early fathers loved to render it "flower," and others make it to mean "watch-tower." Ancient Nazareth probably stood rather higher on the slope than modern Nazareth, the place, in fact, has slid down the hill, as is indicated by the position of the old cisterns and tombs. Thus the "brow of the hill" is more probably one of the cliffs now above the town, or perhaps another hidden beneath the houses, and there is no necessity to seek it at so great a distance as that of the Saltus Domini precipice.

It is curious that Jerome scarcely seems ever to have been in Nazareth, though travelling far and wide over Palestine. In 700 A.D. Bishop Arculph found it an open village, with two churches—one over the grotto, one over the spring, both very large; but soon after troubles began, and it was not till the time of the Crusades that Nazareth became a bishopric. In 1102 Sæwulf found it entirely wasted, only a few columns remaining at the fountain, and though enjoying a temporary prosperity under the Christian monarchy, it was again devastated by the Moslems, and in 1322 Sir John Maundeville writes of it that it was "formerly a great and fair city, but now there is but a small village;" whilst of its inhabitants he says, "they are very wicked and cruel Saracens, and more spiteful than in any other place, and have destroyed all the churches." It is not only Sir John, unfortunately, who can attest this fact; the zealous missionaries who have seen Moslem and Christian, Latin and Greek, shedding one another's blood, Captain Burton who there nearly lost his life, and my own party who fared but ill in the neighbourhood, will alike bear witness to the turbulence of the Nazarenes—an evil character for which they seem to have been notorious ever since the days when they sought to stone our Lord, and gave cause yet earlier for the Jewish proverb, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

The people of the town are remarkable for the gay colouring of their dresses, and the Christian women for their beauty. Many a charming bit of colour, many a shapely figure set off by picturesque costume, many a dark eye and ruddy cheek, have I seen in the streets or by the spring. This beauty is peculiar to the Christians of Bethlehem and Nazareth, and various reasons are given which agree, however, in supposing a mixture of European blood. As to the dress, the causes are manifest; the costume is that commonly worn by Christians, and is only striking by contrast because the villagers of the neighbouring places are Moslem; the townsmen are also richer, and can afford better dress, and this partly accounts for the superior beauty of the better-fed women when contrasted with the worn faces of the overworked and half-starved peasant women of the surrounding poor hamlets.

A more special description of the people, their dress, customs, and religion, must, however, be reserved until they can be treated with the rest of the natives in a future chapter; suffice it here to notice that they present a far more pleasing and picturesque appearance than that of most of the inhabitants of Syrian towns. Leaving the question for the present, we may next turn attention to the two sacred places of Nazareth—the Grotto of the Annunciation and the Virgin's Spring.

While staying in the Casa Nuova I was left

much to myself, for Drake was suffering and often obliged to keep his bed. Being able to chat with them in their native tongue, I made friends with the old monks, and was shown the sacred places with great courtesy. Could a Franciscan be persuaded to use a bath he would be a good companion to any one who will return his courtesy, but he does not like to be laughed at when he shows the place where the Holy House split in two, when the outer room went off on its protracted travels before resting finally on the wooded hill-top of Loretto.

The site of the Holy House was shown as noticed above as early as 700 A.D. in a rock-cut grotto. The pillars of the Crusading church built round it were still visible in 1620 A.D., but the new building erected in 1730 A.D. with the rest of the present monastery, has no connection with the plan of the former, the foundations of which still exist beneath. The modern church is a white-washed, square structure, seventy feet long and fifty broad, directed north and south. The high altar above the sacred grotto is reached by a flight of stairs, from each side of the seventeen marble steps which lead down to the vestibule, called the Chapel of the Angels, where left and right are the altars of St. Joachim and the angel Gabriel. Behind the high altar is the choir, dark and roomy like that at Bethlehem. Descending into the grotto and passing through the vestibule,

the old Franciscan led me into the little rock-cut chamber, with marble floor, and an altar on the north wall. This is the outer half of the grotto, and a wall of separation divides it from the inner half. The outer is called Grotto of the Annunciation, the inner that of St. Joseph. From the roof of the former, which measures twenty feet across and seven feet in depth, hangs pendant near the west side the shaft of a red granite pillar, apparently a column of the old chapel in the grotto, and believed to be miraculously suspended over the very place where the angel stood when bringing the message to Mary. Lighting the little taper on the altar, and kneeling for a moment in prayer, the monk drew the veil from before an Italian picture of the Annunciation, soft and mellow in colour, with a sweet Virgin face, and tawdry silver crown and nimbus sewn on above her head and that of Gabriel.

By the narrow entrance on the right we passed into the inner part of the chapel, dark and damp, equal in width, but double the depth of the outer part. It is only just about high enough to stand in; its altar is placed at the back of the last described, with a picture of St. Joseph. From this a narrow passage twenty feet long, with seventeen steps, leads up obliquely to the inmost part of the cave, a chamber of irregular shape, traditionally supposed to be the Virgin's kitchen, with a chimney hewn in the rock on the east, and an

entrance, now walled up, on the west, by which the father informed me the Virgin used to go out to fetch water from the spring. The whole place is very dark and low, with a damp odour, and resembles the ancient cisterns of which many exist in Nazareth ; yet for nearly twelve centuries this spot has been visited by millions from every Christian land as the early home of Christ and of His mother. I observed to the monk that it was dark for a dwelling-house, but he answered very simply, "The Lord had no need of much light."

It is hardly worth while to describe the modern sanctuary of "St. Joseph's Workshop," a Latin Chapel, built only in 1859, about two hundred yards north of the monastery, in the Moslem Quarter; or the Mensa Christi, a block of rock rudely oval ten feet across and three feet high, in a church built in 1861 in the west quarter of the town. The only other ancient site is that of the Virgin's Fountain, six hundred yards north-east of the Latin Monastery at the end of a lane hedged with prickly pear, and near the flat camping ground among the olives.

As early as 700 A.D. we find Bishop Arculph visiting here a church over the spring. The present building is only about eighty years old, but occupies the same site. It is dedicated to St. Gabriel, and even the Latins admit it to be on the site where first the angel became visible. It is curious that no artist has pitched upon so charming

a subject as that suggested by a meeting with the Heavenly messenger at the Fountain, an idea not discordant with the words of the Gospel. As in the eighth century, so now the spring is under the floor of the church, which is itself half subterranean. The water is led to the left of the high altar, past a well-mouth, by which it is drawn up for pilgrims, and so by a channel to the masonry fountain, where it comes out through metal spouts under an arched recess broad enough for fifteen women to stand side by side. A pool is formed below at the trough, and here the constant succession of the Nazareth women may be seen all day filling their great earthenware jars, standing ankle-deep in water, their pink or green-striped baggy trousers tucked between their knees; their heads are covered, if Moslems, with the moon-shaped tire, if Christians, with a gay handkerchief or the hair platted in long tails. A negress in blue here and there mingles with the crowd, which is chattering, screaming, gossiping, and sometimes fighting.

The Protestant buildings in Nazareth are the most conspicuous, because higher placed than either the beautiful minaret of the mosque or the strong pile of the monastery. The hospital, presided over by Dr. Vartin, an accomplished surgeon and a kind doctor, stands towards the north; the church, well built with a pretty garden and capable of containing five hundred persons, is to the

west, tastefully decorated within, and having over the altar-table, in Arabic, the words read by the Saviour in the Synagogue of Nazareth, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me . . . to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives" (Luke iv. 18).

Highest placed of all, however, half way up the hill, the great orphanage has been building since 1872, and is now complete, and designed to hold two hundred girls. It is built in the symbolic but very inconvenient form of a cross with the sides filled in, and is but ill designed though well executed, and externally a very fine building. From its esplanade the town is visible, spread out almost like a map on the lower slopes, with olive and fig-gardens, cactus hedges and yellow threshing-floors, backed by barren stony hills.

A volume might be written on the history and topography of Nazareth, but the present sketch is necessarily a short one. A chief feature of the place must not, however, be forgotten, the view from the summit of the hill by the little chapel of Neby S'aîn, whose untranslatable name is a puzzle to the residents.

We can scarcely doubt that this scene, unchanged as it must be in its noble natural features, was one often before the eyes of Christ in childhood and manhood, and it is remarkable how much that is stirring in the history of Israel was enacted

within the theatre of rolling hills which bound the view.

Here on the south the broad brown Plain of Esdraelon stretches away to the hills of Samaria. The peak of the Precipitation stands above it at the end of the plateau of Nazareth, and beyond, the top of Tabor and the cone of Jebel Duhy rise up on the left. The ridge of Gilboa appears farther south, cliff above cliff, tilted eastwards and shelving down gently to the plain on the west. Turning to the right the eye follows the broken outline of mountains rising into the volcanic cone of Sheikh Iskander, and farther on, the whole range of Carmel, in its length of twelve miles, is stretched dark and wooded from the peak of the Sacrifice to the Convent promontory where Haifa nestles at its feet. Over the ridge far south the gleaming sea appears; to the north is the hollow bay of Acre with its white circle of surf, the town itself not visible; behind us again on the north are the steep Galilean hills, the Safed mountains, the beautiful plain of Asochis where Kânah stands on the slope; farthest away of all is the snowy dome of Hermon.

Very beautiful on a clear day is this panorama, and striking indeed is the jagged and broken hill horizon, purple against the orange sunset.

Here, then, the Saviour may have stood, and seen before His eyes the theatre of many a tragedy of Jewish history. Tabor, from which the army

of Barak burst on the host of horse and chariots by the Kishon springs beneath; Endor where Saul crept round the hillside by night to the witch's cave; the broad valley down which Gideon drove the Midianites, up which Jehu came in his chariot to Jezreel visible on its rocky knoll; Gilboa, on whose slopes Saul and Jonathan had perished, caught between the Philistines and the precipices; Carmel, the site of the great triumph of the God of Elijah, and the great sea on which still in autumn the little cloud comes up like a man's hand and swells till huge thunder-pillars are piled black and high above the mountains. On the north Sepphoris the Roman capital, Seph the "city set on a hill," Rumeh where some said Messias was first to appear, the road to Capernaum, and the solitary ridges of Hermon where the transfigured Saviour was seen by the three Apostles.

But, as we look round, nineteen centuries later, we mark the influence of the history of the Gospels, and of the growth of tradition. On the south the traditional Leap of our Lord, two miles from the city built on the brow of the hill. In Nain, beneath and unseen, the Christian chapel, commemorative of the raising of the widow's son, now in turn a Moslem mosque. On Carmel a grotto of Elijah, venerated by Christians and Druses. On the hill of Sepphoris a ruined church, six centuries old, once thought to be the

home of Joachim and Anne, the Virgin's parents. On the plain a ruined Cana, perhaps only dating from Crusading times. On Tabor a false site for the Transfiguration, and three churches in ruins.

Yet with a history so long and eventful, the land itself is unchanged; the brown plains, the grey barren hills, the wooded cliffs of Carmel, the gleaming sea, the snow-clad Hermon, are still the same that Christ once looked on; and we merely add to the theatre of Jewish victory or defeat the sites venerated, in loving, if mistaken zeal by the Christian pilgrims of the eighteen centuries before our time.

From the hill-top northwards, the view extends to the ruin of Kânah, a village destroyed not long ago, to judge from the existing remains; beneath the hills north-east lies hidden the prosperous village of Kefr Kenna. These are the two places which claim each to represent Cana of Galilee, the site of Christ's first miracle.

Unfortunately there is scarcely anything in Scripture which would lead to a choice between the two, nor do the chance references of Josephus enable us to do more than speculate as to the comparative likelihood of the sites. In the Talmud, Cana is not noticed; thus there is nothing in contemporary literature to enable us to decide.

One thing only seems pretty certain—that the Crusaders believed Khŭrbet Kânah to be Cana.

Sæwulf in 1102 A.D. gives a very particular description of the place as six miles north of Nazareth, with a place called Roma half way, which he describes as a castle near the road from Acre to Tiberias, where travellers broke the journey.

Fetellus, again (1130 A.D.), places Cana five miles from Nazareth, Sepphoris two, and Tabor four. In the "Citez de Jherusalem" (1187 A.D.), it is made to be three leagues from Nazareth, with a well a bowshot off; Sepphoris being one league, and Tabor three. John Poloner in 1422 A.D. makes it four leagues east of Acre, and two leagues north of Sepphoris. Marino Sanuto describes it most carefully, and draws it on his map as north of a plain reaching south to Sepphoris, with a mountain behind it on the north; he gives the distance as four miles, Tabor also as four, and Sepphoris as two. Brocardus agrees with this description, and Quaresmius in 1620 A.D. notices the same site as an old traditional position for Cana.

These accounts, though the distances seem only approximative, agree in placing Cana at a distance from Nazareth equal to or greater than that of Tabor, and north of Sepphoris and of Roma. They can only therefore apply to Khŭrbet Kânah, situate with a plain to the south, a mountain to the north, and a cave like the crypt described by John Poloner to the west. They cannot be applied to Kefr Kenna south of Roma (now Rûmeh), almost equidistant with Sepphoris from Nazareth and nearer than

Tabor, with a mountain to the south and plain to the north.

The true distances are as follow :

Nazareth to	Kefr Kenna	$3\frac{3}{4}$	English	miles.
,, ,,	Kânah	8	,,	,,
,, ,,	Rûmeh	6	,,	,,
,, ,,	Seffûrieh	$3\frac{1}{2}$	,,	,,
,, ,,	Tabor	$5\frac{1}{2}$	,,	,,

These measurements, as a glance at the map will show, serve to place Crusading Cana from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries at the northern site of Khŭrbet Kânah. John of Wirtzburg indeed (1100 A.D.), might be thought to mean Kefr Kenna, because he makes Cana east instead of north-east of Sepphoris, but he gives its distance as double that of the latter town from Nazareth (four miles, whilst Sepphoris is two according to him), the long mile used by most of his contemporaries being evidently intended. The distances thus serve to point in this case also to Khŭrbet Kânah.

Unfortunately the Crusading locality is not of necessity the true one. Writers who could believe that Shiloh was south of Bethel, who could place Tyre south of Carmel and Capernaum on the shore of the Mediterranean, cannot well be received as authorities on such a difficult question. Their identification is thus merely a matter of curiosity. The early pilgrims, before the Cru-

sades, are generally more correct in their views, but even they cannot be received as certainly informed, so many and so curiously perverse are their errors in other points; in this case, moreover, they scarcely mention the place. St. Willibald (722 A.D.) gives a hint of its whereabouts in noticing Cana as on his road from Nazareth to Tabor—a position which seems to suit neither Kânah nor Kefr Kenna. Sta. Paula (383 A.D.) also passed it on her way from Nazareth to the Sea of Galilee; and Theodorus (530 A.D.) makes it equi-distant with Nazareth from Sepphoris (both five Roman miles), but does not mention the direction.

The comparative claims of the two places may thus be summed up: Khŭrbet Kânah approaches nearest in name, Kefr Kenna is in the most suitable position.

As regards the name, the word Cana, as spelt in the Greek, seems undoubtedly to represent Kanah as spelt in Hebrew with the "Koph," a name occurring in the Book of Joshua as that of a town near Sidon (now Kânah) and that of a valley south of Shechem. Kenna spelt with the "Caf" is quite a different word; the root of Kanah has the meaning "reedy," and this applies well to Khŭrbet Kânah, situate above a large marsh; the root of Kenna signifies "roofed," and would be spelt properly in Greek with the X not the K. Yet this argument is not quite conclusive, because

the modern Arabic name of the "Brook Kanah" is spelt by the natives with the Caf like Kenna, not with the Koph as in the Hebrew.

As regards position, it seems far more probable that Kenna, on the road to Tiberias, would be the place twice visited by Christ, than the remote Kânah, which is on no main line of travel. The objections also that the word Kefr has to be accounted for, and that no signs of antiquity are found at Kefr Kenna, were removed by the Survey, for we found an old ruin called Kenna near the beautiful spring west of the village of Kefr Kenna.

There is, however, another place which has never, I believe, been noticed, and which fits better than either with the early Christian site noticed by Willibald. The little village of Reineh is on the road north-east of Nazareth, and only a mile and a half away; from it a main road leads to Tabor, and by this road is a fine spring called 'Ain Kânah, spelt as the Greek leads us to suppose the Hebrew form of Cana must have been. In the absence of more definite indications, it seems to me that this third site may well rank with either of the others before mentioned.

The Crusaders, then, believed Cana to be north of the Buttauf Plain, the early Christians placed it south. In the seventeenth century both sites were known, but finally ecclesiastical sanction was given to Kefr Kenna; thus the northern site

presents now only ruined walls and dry wells in the rock on the slope of the rugged mountain which is also named Kânah, whilst the southern place is a flourishing Christian village of flat-roofed huts standing above the beautiful gardens and orchards which surround its spring. Like many others of the New Testament towns, Ænon, Bethabara, or Nazareth, there is nothing in the Gospel definitely to fix the position of the place; Josephus and the Talmud give us no aid, and the question appears to me destined to remain always unsettled from want of any evidence sufficiently conclusive.

The survey of the country round Cana and Nazareth, as far west as Kishon, and north to the beautiful valley called Wâdy el Malak, occupied seven weeks from the 20th of October to the 10th of December. It was a period of constantly recurring difficulties, caused partly by the fanaticism of the Moslems, partly by the unhealthy season. The adventures of the party were far from pleasant, and the anxiety was considerable; all, however, was in the end successfully carried through, and Christmas found us safely housed in Haifa. Poor Drake alone succumbed to the constant exertion and the cruel pain in his liver, which ever since the fatal day on which the base line was first laid out in the Plain of Esdraelon, had continued to grow worse till he was obliged to take a sea-trip to Egypt during the winter months.

Warned by the misfortunes of others, we encamped first at some little distance from the quarrelsome town of Nazareth, in the flourishing village of Mujeidil west of it, a place containing Christians and even a few Protestants.

On the night of our arrival the weather broke, and on the following day the thunder-pillars, which had been piled over the dark slate-colored ridge of Carmel, gradually approached; the effect was magnificent, with a mid distance of low hills covered with oak woods. The storm burst suddenly, the rain descending with violence, hissing on the ground as if not able to come down fast enough, and accompanied with gusts of wind, thunder, and lightning. This naturally called to mind the great storm after the sacrifice on Carmel, when Ahab sped over the plain before the swollen Kishon became sufficiently full to intercept him. In the evening the lightning over Carmel, in broad sheets and vivid forks, was equally fine. The face of the country was soon changed: crocuses, narcissus, lilies, squills, and red anemone appeared, the grass began soon to sprout, and the birds to arrive, and the yellow wagtail appeared by the springs; long wreaths of cloud formed on the hills, and bursts of sunlight or of rain alternated. The extreme clearness of the atmosphere was most remarkable, and distances became most difficult to judge, being apparently only half what they were in reality.

The scenery in the Nazareth Hills differs very

much in different parts; round the city itself it consists of rolling, rounded mountains of bare white limestone, but on the west these are hidden beneath a growth of forest trees. The wood consists almost entirely of oak, and in places is open with corn beneath the trees; but for the greater part of its extent it is very dense, especially near Harosheth (El Harithîyeh), a place thence named, where underwood, more or less thick, is found. Through this forest runs the beautiful valley called Wâdy el Malak, generally rendered "King's Valley," but perhaps better "Valley of Pasture." Such a valley, with its cool brook and clear springs, its broad corn-fields and patches of turf, its flocks and herds we may suppose David to have in remembrance in the twenty-third Psalm. On either side the slopes are covered by the oak-forest, and innumerable wild doves find shelter for their nests among the branches. For quiet beauty we saw nothing in Palestine equal to this valley, up which in 1875 we ran the levels, thus visiting it day after day for more than a week.

Yet even here the absence of song-birds was very remarkable. Birds of prey, eagles, kites, hawks, vultures, and griffons may be seen almost anywhere in Palestine; the twittering of swallows and the screaming of the Galilean swift are also common; the jays and the comical little "boomehs," as the owls are called, are always found in the olive-trees; but only at Jericho did we come

across the bulbul, and only once did I hear the nightingale, near Jerusalem. The noise of the cicalas in summer in the olives, and at night the peculiar gamut of the "wowies" or jackals, and occasionally the bark of a hyena, and the shrill note of the great black crickets, are the most familiar sounds in tent life.

Mujeidil being a place visited by the missionaries, we here witnessed a curious scene. The native Protestant schoolmaster invited us to breakfast, and to the service held by an ordained native clergyman. The school was cool and roomy, with a bright glare through the window and door; the flat roof of wood was supported on masonry arches at intervals, and consisted of boughs smoke-blackened and untrimmed; the walls and floor were shiny, with plaster also stained with smoke. Hence the effect was that so peculiar to these interiors, of broad dusky shadow and little bright patches of light: here and there faint lines of tobacco smoke curled in the air, and along the step of the divan was a row of old slippers of the congregation. Three or four pigeons flew cooing about, and a dozen purple swallows were half hidden in the rafters, whilst an old hen with a tuft on her head stood in a corner.

On one side sat the men, some of them great villains in appearance, in old worn "kufeyehs" and brown "abbas;" behind them a young woman, probably only looking in out of curiosity, to see the

Franks, dressed in the Nazareth Christian style, with the baggy trousers—a plump, dusky face, very bright eyes, and hair all tangled. Farther on the old schoolmaster, in a black mantle and white under-robe, hook-nosed, bald-headed, and grey-bearded; by him eight children of various ages, with fat, dark faces, rather pretty, but, as usual, coarse in feature, with bright sparkling eyes, white teeth, and well-shaped mouths. One girl had a sort of stomacher of silver coins, a second was in pink-striped calico, with a huge black Bible. A handsome little boy wore an olive-green jacket, a scarlet fezz, a salmon-coloured waistcoat bound with black braid, and white trousers.

Conversation with the minister, dressed in black overcoat and white gown, opened the proceedings, lemonade, coffee, and a cigarette followed. All the congregation then rose, the minister removed his fezz, and a prayer, a chapter, and a short sermon formed the service, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, in which all joined, and the blessing; the whole in Arabic. The natives were reverential and attentive, but some of the children got tired of the sermon and set to teasing one another.

Such peaceful scenes were not, however, our only experiences. One of our servants bringing provisions from Nazareth was set upon by the people of Yafa—a village of evil reputation. He foolishly endeavoured to make a prisoner of one offender, and a general rescue ensued, our man

being beaten very severely and his pistol stolen; he would probably have been half murdered but for our Bashi-bazouk, who turned out and was nearly stoned; he fired on the crowd and dispersed it. Correspondence with the local authorities followed, but no satisfaction was at first obtained.

Nor was this our only trouble. Drake and I both suffered from the change of weather, Drake especially with asthma and fever. Sergeant Black was laid up with one of those painful ulcers on the hand, from which no member of the party finally escaped, being connected in some mysterious way with the low malarious fever. Rain and sirocco in succession interrupted the work, and poor Jill, one of our favourite terriers, went mad, and had to be shot to save the rest. Finally, an olive-tree fell on the camp, nearly killing some of the servants.

Nor were matters improved when we got to Nazareth. Drake was here laid up with fever, and Sergeant Black had a slight attack which made him unfit for work. Our muleteer managed to get his head badly broken in a street row; finally, a fanatical peasant at Seffûrieh bitterly reproached my guide and soldier with serving a Kafir or "pagan," and picked a quarrel, which was followed by a shower of stones; the soldier chased him and fired at him, the man was finally imprisoned and fined as an example; but we still

had the Yafa case unsettled, and a second affair yet more serious occurred soon after.

Under these circumstances I wrote to Constantinople and stated our difficulties to Sir Henry Elliot, asking for a Firman signed by the Sultan, instead of the Vizier's letter previously used by us, in order to enable us to claim more firmly the aid of the Turkish authorities. My request was courteously and promptly answered, and the Firman arrived soon after, and proved a most valuable document.

Leaving Nazareth as soon as possible, we made our new camp at the village of Sheikh Abreik, situate on a white hill, which projects as a bastion from the rest, forming one side of the narrow gorge where, under the cliffs of Carmel, the Kishon leaves the great Plain of Esdraelon to enter that of Acre. Here we spent a pleasant fortnight, but here also we had troubles with the neighbouring peasantry.

Sheikh Abreik stands on the site of an unknown town of no little importance. To the west the hillside is completely undermined by extensive excavations and systems of tombs which required many days to examine. Under the town is one called "the Cave of Gehenna," and on the hill is another consisting of chamber within chamber, the first entered being painted with palm branches, ivy-leaves, and other mortuary emblems in red; in one tomb the inscription "Parthene"

is written in Greek, in another we found graves unopened, and the entrances most carefully closed; but unfortunately the roof had fallen in, and all that our excavation brought us was a delicate little tear-bottle, the glass oxidised by age, and covered with a prismatic crust which scaled off easily.

Into every entrance I could find I forced a way, sometimes opening up the door with a spade just enough to force my shoulders through, and creeping into the dark chamber, where the taper revealed ghastly creeping insects, and in one case a scorpion, which stung me pretty sharply. This inspection laid the foundation of a systematic comparison of many hundred tombs throughout the country, which has led to conclusions of some value with regard to the comparative antiquity of various kinds of sepulchres. It is pretty clear, for instance, that the tomb with a grave parallel to the side of the central chamber is a later arrangement, used by the Jews about the Christian era, instead of the Kokim tomb, in which the body was placed in a sort of pigeon-hole, with its feet nearest the chamber; and further, that the rolling stone was also a later contrivance, being found almost exclusively with the loculi or later tombs. These conclusions fully accord with the description of the Holy Sepulchre as a tomb with a rolling stone to its door, for our Lord's tomb must have been one with a loculus or grave parallel to the side of the chamber, because two angels are described as

sitting, "the one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain" (John xx. 12), which would have been clearly impossible in the more primitive form of Jewish tomb with Kokim.

Sheikh Abreik was a great place for game; a flight of woodcock arrived on the 7th of November, and, in spite of the constant massacre which they underwent at our hands (Drake being a very good shot), they stayed a week, during which time we killed and ate about fifty, sending some as presents to Nazareth. Quail and red-legged partridge were also to be found near the camp. One day we had an exciting hunt, over the cotton-fields, after gazelles. The dogs chased a huge wild-cat, over the hill and down a chimney cut in the rock, so that it alighted on the heads of our astonished grooms, in a cave which formed our stable beneath. They also unearthed some fine specimens of the ichneumon, almost as large as themselves, and speedily put them to death. There were large flocks of lapwings recently arrived, but very shy, and in the marshy ground the small bustard was to be found, and occasionally a snipe near the river.

The first really serious attack on the party—though not the last nor the worst—was made near this camp. Sergeant Black was quietly surveying near the village of El Harithîyeh, where, as it appeared afterwards in evidence, a fête or "fantasia" was being held. The young men were

firing at a mark, and one or more turning at right angles, deliberately fired at the Sergeant on the neighbouring hill. He must have been in no little danger, as he brought home two bullets which had fallen near him. Our soldier (Husein) behaved with great pluck, and charged up the hill at the crowd to disperse them. We at once wrote to the Governor of Acre, and I lost no time in telegraphing to the Consul-general, Mr. Eldridge, at Beirut. The Governor sent a party to the village and took fifteen prisoners, though the inhabitants were at first inclined to make resistance.

The Lieutenant-Governor of Nazareth, of whose conduct we had much cause to complain, appears to have been reprimanded, for he came down to our camp to make friends. He was a most extraordinary character—Faris Effendi by name. His personal appearance was not improved by the affectation of European costume, a purple flannel shirt, a bright brown jacket, trousers of greenish hue, with broad black stripes; on his head a cotton pocket-handkerchief with purple border, put on to guard from sunstroke, under a shabby old red fezz; on his eyes huge blue goggles. For an hour and a half he stayed, showering protestations of love and friendship upon us, and, even to the last, he continued his chatter, and disappeared still talking in an excited manner.

Of this official and his predecessors I was told many curious stories by Mr. Zeller, the Protestant

clergyman. Faris Effendi had one passion—his slûkîs or hunting-dogs, which he petted almost like children. He had curious ways also of increasing his income, his salary being a mere pittance on which he could not live ; one was to levy a tax on his subjects of all the white hens in the villages; wherever on his travels through the Nazareth district he saw a white hen it is said he sent to claim it as his own. Mr. Zeller related that another official offered to give his good services, in some difficulties about a schoolhouse, in consideration of the present of a pair of white trousers. A colonel in the Jordan valley, in command of a camp of 3000 men, held a review in honour of some passing travellers, and afterwards demanded a "bakshîsh" of ten francs. Another dignitary was entertained with a game of chess, at Mr. Zeller's house, in presence of his admiring circle of followers; finding himself, however, in danger of being beaten, he waited till Mr. Zeller's attention was for the moment diverted, and then quietly removed his opponent's queen. It is said he expressed much satisfaction at his own ability in winning the game, after having taken this rather unusual method of retrieving his fortunes.

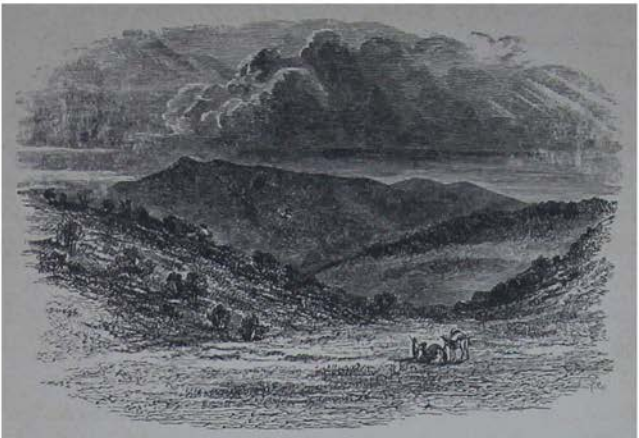
One curious fact, as showing the infamous condition of the administration, we here also ascertained. A Greek banker named Sursuk, to whom the Government was under obligations, was allowed to buy the northern half of the Great

Plain and some of the Nazareth villages for the ridiculously small sum of £20,000 for an extent of seventy square miles; the taxes of the twenty villages amounted to £4000, so that the average income could not be stated at less than £12,000, taking good and bad years together. The cultivation was materially improved under his care, and the property must be immensely valuable, or would be, if the title could be considered secure; but it is highly probable that the Government will again seize the land when it becomes worth while to do so.

The peasantry attributed the purchase to Russian intrigue, being convinced that their hated enemy has his eyes greedily turned to Palestine and to Jerusalem as a religious capital, and is ever busy in gaining a footing in the country.

The preceding pages give but a sketch of the labours of our first autumn. The information collected cannot be condensed into a few pages, and it forms a very considerable section of the memoir to the map. The main points of interest have been touched upon, but the discoveries of aqueducts, tombs, a hermitage, etc., the exploration of Crusading churches, Roman sepulchral buildings, and other ruins, must be at present passed over in silence.

On the 10th of December the weather threatened to break up, and we marched down to the neat little house which we had hired for the winter, in the German colony at Haifa.



CARMEL.

CHAPTER VI.

CARMEL AND ACRE.

THERE was no part of Palestine with which I became more familiar than the neighbourhood of Carmel, and, with the exception of Jerusalem, there was no station where the party remained so long. From the 10th of December, 1872, till the 26th of the following February, we lodged in the German colony, surveying, when weather permitted, and arranging our field-work during the wet days. From the end of February till the 20th of March, we were camped under the shadow of the mountain at Jeb'a. Again in the autumn of 1873 we marched through Haifa, and once more,

after the Safed attack, we found shelter in the monastery and in the German hotel, from the 13th of August until the end of September. As a familiar and pleasant place of retreat, I have, therefore, an affectionate remembrance of the Carmel country; and the scenery is perhaps more attractive than that of any other part of Palestine, the climate more healthy, and the people more civilised.

Carmel is best described as a triangular block of mountains, the apex being the promontory on which the Carmelite monastery stands. The watershed runs south-east from this point for twelve miles, to the Mahrakah or "place of burning," a peak visible from Jaffa in fine weather. The highest part of the mountain is 1740 feet above the sea at the Druse village of 'Esfia. The Peak of Mahraka is only 1687 feet high, and the promontory by the monastery 500, but the slope of the shed is gradual. Long spurs run out westwards from this ridge and fill up the triangle, their western extremities having steep slopes above a narrow plain along the sea-coast. In the valleys among them are two fine springs, and others smaller. The north-eastern declivity of the ridge is extremely steep, and fine cliffs occur in places. At the foot of the mountain are numerous springs feeding the Kishon, which runs beneath gradually diverging northwards. The little town of Haifa nestles under the promontory,

by which it is sheltered from the south-west wind, its bay forming the best harbour on the coast. On the north side of the bay is St. Jean d'Acre, twelve miles along the curve of the shore from Haifa. On the narrow plain, between Carmel and the sea, there are also many places of interest. Sycaminon, Geba of Horsemen, Calamon, Elijah's Fountain, the Crusading Capernaum, and the strong and beautiful Château Pelerin with its little advanced port of Le Detroit. On Carmel itself is a ruined synagogue, and on the south of the range beneath the inland cliffs are the fine springs feeding the Crocodile river.

First of all in interest comes the cliff of El Mahrakah "the place of burning" or of sacrifice, a peak, forming the south-east extremity of the main range, and tilted high above the white downs south of the mountain, in consequence, as we discovered, of volcanic disturbance. The peak is a semi-isolated knoll with a cliff some forty feet high looking south-east; beneath it a small plateau of arable soil with olives; bushes and shrubs grow up the cliff, and among them a little modern chapel stands near a huge dry reservoir; below the plateau, at the very edge of the steep slope which descends to the plain, is a well, cut in hard rock and shaded by a large locust-tree. It contained water even in December before the rains, though not in great quantity, and it was infested with large hornets. From the summit of the cliff

the view was wonderfully interesting: on the west the spurs of Carmel, the yellow sand-hills round Cæsarea, the far horizon of sea; on the north Acre, the Galilean hills, Lebanon and Hermon; on the east Nazareth, Tabor, Nain, Endor, Shunem, Bethshan, Gilboa with Jezreel at its feet, the Great Plain, distant Gilead, the Kishon, and Jenîn; at the foot of the mountain, Keimûn the Crusading Cain-Mons, the Biblical Jokneam.

At least as early as the close of the last century, the Carmelite fathers looked on this peak as the scene of Elijah's sacrifice. The place seems to fit the account well. A plateau gives space for the assembly of the multitude. A well close by may have supplied water. Fourteen hundred feet below is Kishon, where the priests were slain. The sea is invisible, except from the very summit, and thus the prophet's servant could have seen only by climbing up to the top of Carmel, from the plateau where the altar may have stood, the little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, spreading gradually over the sea, the plain, and the bushy mountain spurs. We require a site for the altar near the summit, or the prophet's servant must have taken at least an hour for each journey; on the other hand, we require water other than that in the Kishon, if the sacrifice took place near the summit, or the water-carrying would have taken three or four hours to complete. Both requisites are found in the site at El Mahrakah.

It is possible perhaps to lay too much stress on the name, for its antiquity is not known, and it is thought to be connected with Druse sacrifices yearly performed here. The Druses are not natives of Carmel, and their tradition can therefore scarcely be thought to have come down from the time of Elijah, but is far more probably derived from the monks, with whom they evidently live on good terms, for, as we had occasion to see for ourselves, they present votive offerings to the old wooden image of Elijah in the chapel of the monastery. It is certain that mediæval Christian legends are preserved by the wild Bedawin near Jericho, and there is therefore some probability of more modern monkish traditions, derived from the monastery, remaining current among the Druses of Carmel. There is a second name which has been thought also to have a connection with the grand tragedy of the slaughter of the priests of Baal occurring near the Kishon; this is Tell el Kassîs, "the hillock of the priest," a name applied to a shapeless mound near the river-bank; but, in this case also, much caution is necessary before accepting the supposed derivation, for Kassîs is the word applied to a Christian priest, and the word Kohen or Kamir would more naturally be expected if there was any real connection with the idolatrous priests of Baal. Yet, however the tradition of the sacrifice became attached to this peak, there is

no point on the ridge which appears more suitable for the dramatic incidents of the Bible story or for the erection of a mountain altar.

Carmel, "the place of thickets," was at one time cultivated, as shown by the rock wine-presses among its copses. In 1837 it had many villages on its slopes, but these were ruthlessly destroyed by Ibrahim Pacha, and only two now remain—'Esfia on the main ridge, Ed Dâlieh (perhaps Idalah of Zebulon) on a high spur; both are inhabited by the mountain-loving Druses, and are remarkable for their race of fine handsome men and beautiful women, some with flaxen curly hair and blue eyes. The whole mountain is covered thickly with brush-wood, mastic, hawthorn, the spurge laurel, and, on the top, dwarf pines; the luxuriance of the vegetation, rolling down the valleys between the steep grey and rusty cliffs like a dark cataract, attests the richness of the red soil, and the fine mountain air makes the place the healthiest district in Palestine. Among the thickets game abounds,—the Nimr or hunting leopard, wild pigs, gazelles, and fallow-deer; partridges and other birds are seen continually in riding about the mountain. To this known fauna we were able to make an important addition.

From natives of Haifa we learnt that a kind of deer called Yahmûr was to be found on Carmel, and, offering a reward, we procured from some of the Arab charcoal-burners a specimen which re-

sembled the English roebuck. The flesh we ate and found excellent, the skin and bones Mr. Drake sent to the Museum at Cambridge; and in 1876 I was informed by competent authority that the specimen was indistinguishable from the English roebuck. Now the interest of this discovery lies in the name. The Yahmûr gives a title to a large valley in a wooded district south of Carmel, and in translating the nomenclature I found that it was a Hebrew word used in the Bible (Deut. xiv. 5) to designate a kind of deer. The authorised version renders it "fallow-deer," but this latter animal is properly called Ayal in Hebrew and Rîm in Arabic. Thus until we were able to ascertain the existence of the roebuck, previously heard of but not seen by Dr. Tristram, and to obtain the name Yahmûr, there was no clue to the true identification of the deer which furnished Solomon's table daily with choice venison (1 Kings iv. 23).

The history of the Carmelite settlement is interesting and not generally known. The information which I was able to collect in 1875 from their records and by word of mouth from the monks may be briefly summarised.

Carmel has been a sacred mountain from the time of its earliest appearance in history. Elijah himself "repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down" (1 Kings xviii. 30), from which we infer that a sacred place or Makom had existed

on the summit of the mountain at an earlier period, though, according to the Talmud, such high places became for ever unlawful after the building of the Temple at Jerusalem. From Tacitus we learn that Vespasian visited a place on Carmel, sacred to the deity of the mountain but without either statue or altar, and even now, as above noted, the Druses hold the site at El Mahrakah in reverence as a sacred place.

In the early Christian period the memory of Elijah consecrated Carmel, and it became a favourite resort of hermits, to whom in 412 A.D. John, the forty-second Bishop of Jerusalem, gave a rule of life. In 1185, after Jerusalem had been taken by the Crusaders, a church rose over the sacred Grotto of Elijah, and in 1209 another monastery of St. Margaret or St. Brocardus was built in a steep gorge south of the promontory. We visited from Haifa its ruins, with a cave containing sedilia for the monks and an upper open story, a spring with sedilia beside it, and below, at the opening of the valley, a second spring, and a garden of fruit trees, pomegranates, apricots, and figs. The lower spring was called after Elijah, and the title still remains in the corrupted form El Haiyeh ("the snake"), applied to the stream from it. A tradition exists that Elijah turned the fruits of the garden to stone, and the huge geodes in the white chalk of the valley are shown as the petrified fruit. This monastery was sacked by the

Saracens in 1238, the monks were massacred and thrown into a rock-cut tank by the lower spring, and hence the place is still called "the Valley of Martyrs."

In 1245 St. Simon Stock, a Kentish man, became General of the Carmelites. He is said to have received from the Virgin the scapular or distinctive tabard worn by the monks of this order; for sixteen years he lived in a cave on Carmel, and was visited by St. Louis during his stay in Palestine.

A monastery of St. Bertoldo rose round his cave, and its ruins are still shown on the slope north-west of the present building, under the lighthouse, near the chapel containing the cave of Simon Stock. In 1291, however, the Saracens fell upon the monks whilst chanting the "Salve Regina," and massacred them all.

The history of the two subsequent monasteries gives a good example of that energy and persistence which once formed the main characteristics of the Church of Rome. In 1620 the order of Carmelites was extinct in Palestine when a certain Father Prospero, of the monastery of Biscaglia near Genoa, was ordered by his General to proceed with his monks to Persia—probably he was found to be a dangerous man at home, for his history bears witness to his ambitious and energetic character. He got no farther than Carmel, where he left his companions and returned to

Rome to obtain leave from the Propaganda to establish a missionary hospice on the mountain. In a second journey he obtained from the Pope the title of Prior for himself and his successors, and, in 1631, he bought the land round the Grotto of Elijah where the present monastery stands, and round the cave called "School of the Prophets" (now El Khudr) at the foot of the promontory. He erected chapels in both places, but a Moslem derwish succeeded in establishing himself at the latter place, and in 1635 the Moslems took it by force and made it a mosque. Quarrels and persecutions followed; in 1653 robbers stripped Father Prospero and tied him to a tree. Soon after he died and was buried in the upper chapel.

In 1761 the famous Dhahr el 'Amr, of whom there is much to be said later, had already made himself lord of Acre and king of Galilee; he despoiled the monastery, and in 1767 ordered its destruction on the plea that it was in a dangerous position on the slope of the hill. In 1775 he was beheaded at Acre, and his son 'Aly in revenge massacred all the monks.

In 1799 the sick of Napoleon's army were sheltered in the monastery, but, on his retreat, they were all killed by the Moslems. A pyramid in the front garden of the monastery marks the grave where their bones were afterwards laid by the monks. In 1821, by order of the Pacha of Acre, the monastery was destroyed, and the new

monks arriving from Europe saw it in flames on the hill-top.

Warned by the natives not to land, they returned to Europe, but three of them came back in 1825—Fra Gianbattista of Frascati, Fra Matteo of Philippopolis, and Fra Giusto of Naples. They built the present monastery from a design by the first named, and so strong has it been made, with high walls and an apse which affords flank protection on the east (where also, as being more exposed, there is a ditch), that the monks need scarcely fear further massacres. In 1830 other monks arrived. In 1872 Fra Matteo died in extreme old age, the last survivor of the three founders. This information I obtained in 1875 from Fra Cirillo, the lame lay-brother, a courteous old man who delighted in stories of the monastery.

Situate at the end of the ridge, five hundred feet above the sea, reached by a steep ascent of steps, and guarded by a carefully-constructed entrance to the courtyard and by savage dogs, the old monastery stands facing the fresh breeze, and surrounded by vineyards and gardens, among which small chapels are dedicated to the Virgin, to St. John Baptist, and to Sta. Theresa, patroness of the bare-footed or reformed Carmelites. The huge pile, square and lofty, with a dome to its chapel and a broad flat roof, looks more like a castle than a house of devotion. Seventeen monks

inhabit it, but there is room for thirty, and beds are provided for twenty-eight guests besides. The monastery owns three hundred goats and twenty oxen, the monks dry tobacco for snuff, and make a scent called "Eau de Carme" from the flowers of the mountain. They are supposed only to eat meat when ill, but it is said that if a deer is shot, some of the brethren are at once placed on the sick list; fish they may eat, and they include under this category anything staying longer in the water than on land—as for instance wild-duck and other sea-fowl. Living in the monastery for six weeks, I found the monks to be goodnatured and fond of gossip, but fully convinced that in England the sun was never seen, and that the people all lived on potatoes and cold meat.

The chapel of the monastery is octagonal, and, under the high altar, is a cave five yards long and three yards broad, with an altar of rock dedicated to Elijah. Lighting two tapers, the old lay brother drew back a curtain and showed us the statue of the Madonna del Carmine over the high altar, well modelled in wood, life size, and robed in white satin, with the infant on her right arm, and in her left hand some of the little square black charms so often worn round the neck in Italy. The statue was made in Genoa early in this century. The niche is surrounded with silver lamps offered by pilgrims.

Tradition says that in the "little cloud" over the

sea Elijah beheld the future Virgin Mother typified. It is remarkable, however, that the native Christians prefer to offer vows to the old wooden statue of Elijah on a side altar. It is covered with chains, bracelets, and anklets, presented by peasants. A gold Austrian coin, worth five Napoleons, is hung round its neck, with a filigree silver cross presented by an English convert.

There is nothing remarkable in the chapel, which is gaudily painted in modern Italian style. Over a side altar to the south, the heart of the Count of Craon lies entombed, having been brought to the monastery in 1864.

Carmel is remarkable for the profusion of its flowers. In November we found on its sides the cytisus, crocus, narcissus, the pink cistus, and large camomile daisies, the colocasia, and the hawthorn in bud. The Judas tree I have also twice found in remote parts, and, in spring, wild tulips, the dark red anemone like a poppy, the beautiful pink phlox, the cyclamen, little purple stocks, large marigolds, wild geranium, and saxifrage, with rock roses of three kinds, pink, yellow, and white. Butterflies also flourish: orange-tips, sulphurs, the great swallow-tail (Machaon), and a peculiar transparent species something like the Apollo, apparently peculiar to the mountain, are the commonest.

Leaving the wild ridges of Carmel we must, however, descend to the plain beneath, to the

thriving town of Haifa, which has gradually grown in size as Acre has sunk into decay, and which bids fair to be a place of much importance should the prosperity of Palestine ever become greater.

Napoleon is said to have held that Acre was the key to Syria. The natural advantages of the position are great. The bay is the only harbour of importance south of Tyre; from Acre roads lead into Upper Galilee, and southwards they ascend gradually to the watershed of Judea. The whole of the great corn harvest of the Hauran finds a port at Acre, and the rich Plain of Esdraelon close by forms a natural highway across Palestine. But while Acre is the more important town, the south end of the bay at Haifa is the best harbour, both because the projection of the Carmel promontory breaks the force of the sea, and because the high ridge of the mountain forms a shelter against equinoctial and other south-western gales.

Haifa is not noticed in the Bible. In the Talmud it appears under the same name, which means "a haven." In the middle ages the place was called Porphyreon by a strange mistake, the real town of that name being north of Sidon. It was also known as Cayphas, and the derivations given are very curious. Some supposed the name to come from Cephas, "a stone," from the stony mountain; others thought it was named from

Simon Peter, who was said to have fished here; whilst Sir John Maundeville boldly asserts that it was built by and named after Caiaphas, the high-priest.

The curious rock cemetery is mentioned by many Jewish travellers. It is of value as showing both kinds of loculus to have been used by the Jews, the tombs being close to the present Jewish graveyard, and having the golden candlestick more than once represented on the façades. The place appears, indeed, to have been always a favourite resort of the Jews, and over 1000 are still to be found within its walls, forming a quarter of the population, which includes 1100 Moslems and 1000 Greek Christians, besides Latins, Greek Catholics, and Maronites.

The town is walled and well-built, with a mosque, a court-house, and many large private dwellings. On the west side, the extensive ruins of "Ancient Haifa" stretch along the shore beyond the German colony, and the magnificence of former buildings is attested by the fragments of marble, granite, porphyry, and greenstone lying in the shingle on the beach.

Two miles farther south-west are the remains of another large town, at the place called Tell es Semak. There can scarcely be a doubt that this is the ancient Sycaminon, often confused with Haifa, but a place distinct and named from its sycamine fig-trees—a stunted specimen of which

still stands near, with its little figs growing out of the stem.

There is much to be said of the German colony of 300 peasants and mechanics, mostly from the Black Forest, who have settled near Haifa, and, on the whole, prospered very well. But an account of this colony must be reserved for another chapter. It is enough here to say that their kindness to us was great whenever we came in contact with them; and we have cause especially to remember with gratitude Herr Kraft, of the hotel, and Herr Shumacher, the chief of the colony. In a little house near the school of the colony we bivouacked, rather than settled, for our first winter, and felt a great relief in the bright faces, the neat dresses, and cheerful salutations of the colonists, after months of dirt and misery witnessed amongst the starved and oppressed peasantry of the middle country.

The appearance of the bay in winter was very fine. In calm weather we looked northwards to the long ridge of Galilean mountains, with the strong walls and white minaret of Acre beneath, and the snowy dome of Hermon above. For five minutes every evening a glorious crimson flush spread over the mountains, gradually dying out as the cold blue shadow crept up the slopes. In the morning the long curve of the bay, the misty hills, the beautiful line of palms along the dunes, with the sun rising behind, made a subject fit for Turner's

pencil. The town itself, backed by the Carmel bluff, was equally picturesque, with the old tower above its walls, riddled by English shot and shell in 1840, yet still mounting one gun. As the winter went on, the heavy seas came rolling in round the promontory, and a huge cormorant, or a Mother Carey's chicken, might be seen hovering over the waves, or a flight of wild-duck bobbing on the rollers. Great shoals of fish came in, and were caught with the primitive cast-nets of the naked fishermen; and, after the storm, the beach would be found strewn with shells, amongst which the *Murex trunculus* was common, from which the Tyrian purple was derived.

The Chilzon, or murex, is, indeed, closely connected with Carmel. The Rabbis understood the expression, "riches of the deep," to refer to the Chilzon, and to be promised to the tribe of Zebulon as an inheritance. The Chilzon was fished at a place called after it, and as far north as Phœnicia. Its name still exists in the modern Wâdy Halzûn, a valley tributary to the Belus River, near Acre, in which river the murex was found. The expression in the Song of Songs, "thine head .... like Carmel .... the hair of thine head like purple" (vii. 5), was also understood by the Jews to refer to the Chilzon, and, by a natural elision, to its being found under Carmel.

The murex gave many colours, from green and deep blue to red, but the Tyrian purple was

the dark blood-colour, like the darkest of "black roses" as the ancients called them, and only one drop of the dye was found in the vein of the mollusk, which circumstance accounted for the expensiveness of the Tyrian garments.

The Kishon, as noticed in a former chapter, enters the plain of Acre by a narrow gorge under the cliffs of Carmel, on the north side of the ridge. From this point it gradually works away north-west, and is fed by fine springs from the foot of the mountain, and also from near the low hills on the right bank. Most of these springs, but especially 'Ain S'adeh and the 'Ayûn el Werd, flowing from among the rocks near the foot of Carmel, are perennial. Thus, beneath the main ford, west of El Harathîyeh (Harosheth of the Gentiles), the river is full of water even in autumn. Above this point its stony bed is hidden by the oleander bushes, but below it flows slowly through a barren, marshy plain, between banks some ten feet high —an impassable stream, but very sluggish, having only a fall of eighty feet in the last five miles of its course.

The mouth is curious; the prevailing winds blow from the south-west, and the dunes are gradually heaping up and advancing on this side, so that the river is always forming new mouths farther north. The lagoons now existing behind the dunes on the left bank are perhaps results of the former course. The river breaks through

the sand and flows to the sea when the wind is from the east; but, even in wet years, a bar is formed whenever the wind is in the west, blowing on shore. Thus I have found it almost impassable in September, before the rains, but quite dry in January, after they had fallen, according to the wind.

Few scenes more picturesque and more thoroughly Oriental are to be found in Palestine than that at the mouth of the Kishon. The palms, which flourish only on the coast, where water and sand occur together and frost is never experienced, are here found all along the dunes and round the lagoons; the banks, some thirty yards apart, are fringed with rushes and a sort of pink, fleshy-leaved plant. Along the sides stand the grey herons, watching for fish, whilst here and there a white egret steps daintily about, and on the sand the Kentish dottrel runs hastily seawards as the waves ebb out, and the red-shanks and sandpipers skim along in large flocks. Behind all rises the dark steep slope of Carmel, with white piles of cloud above, and a foreground of palms sets the scene in an appropriate frame.

The birds are very numerous. Wild-duck and snipe are found in the marshes, the African kingfisher hovers over the stream, and various species of gulls flit along the shore. Huge crabs swarm along the line of the bay, and occasionally a great number of rays and skates. In the deeper water

a porpoise is sometimes to be seen, and many species of good edible fish are caught.

One of our most curious adventures at Haifa was a visit to a native Christian, who invited us, with some of the chief men of the German colony, to dinner on New Year's Eve.

We rode into the town in a sort of *char-à-banc* (the only carriage in the colony) without any springs, the horses harnessed with the German peaked yoke. We were received by our host in the usual native Christian dress—a long shirt, with a dress of striped calico (kumbaz) above, the boots of white stuff, with side-springs and patent-leather toes—quite the height of the fashion—the legs in white stockings under the shirt. Our hostess wore a green silk gown, and her hair plaited in two tails and parted on the left.

Seated round the divan, we drank neat raki and smoked cigarettes. My conversation was principally directed to Herr Shumacher, and I found that great things were expected from our visit to the colony. The rest of the talk was conducted in German, French, English, and Arabic, and M. Azar, our host, was principally interested in a cruel murder of a husband by a pretty Moslem woman, who was afterwards transferred to the Pacha's harem. The servant—in a black uniform with red piping, brass buttons, straw-coloured trousers, white boots, and an old fezz—bore a suspicious likeness to M. Azar's eldest son. At

dinner I sat between Madame, who spoke only Arabic, and an old German, who had a cold and wore a grey suit and a comforter; he spoke only German, and my conversation was limited. A turkey and bananas were the chief luxuries, and native wine the worst feature of the banquet. After dinner, the old German fell asleep, and conversation in general was not lively. At nine p.m. we retired, the experience of this semi-civilised society being far less interesting than that of the hospitality of the Jerrar family at Jeb'a, or subsequently of the wild Bedawin at Jericho.

The offenders in the three attacks on the Survey party, mentioned in the last chapter, had as yet received no proper punishment. A fine of one pound had been levied, by Faris Effendi, on the man who endeavoured to stone my soldier at Seffûrieh, but it had not come into my hands, and none of the others had been either fined or imprisoned. My representations to Mr. Eldridge, the Consul-General for Syria, induced him to send down the Vice-Consul of Beyrout, Mr. Jago, who, with a Turkish official, formed a mixed commission, which sat at Acre, and terminated their inquiry on the 27th of January, the offences having been committed in November. On the 12th of February I received notice of the punishments awarded. The men who beat our servant at Yafa were imprisoned for twenty-five days and fined

ten Napoleons; the villagers of El Harathîyeh, who fired on Sergeant Black, were also imprisoned and fined five pounds. This award was made in February, 1873, but it was not till May, 1874, that I actually received the money, after an amount of official correspondence perfectly appalling to remember. Such is the despatch with which the Turks administer justice, when not immediately under the eye of our able Consular representatives.

The business of these actions often took me over to Acre, and I was able, in Mr. Jago's company, to go round the ramparts, not generally seen by visitors. A brisk canter for a couple of hours would bring me to the mouth of the Belus, which bears a strong family likeness to the Kishon. In autumn the whole of the shore between this river and the town is often covered by troops of camels bringing corn from the Hauran, and the dark Bedawin—some of whom have probably never before seen the sea—may there be found swimming in the shallow water, with their water-skins inflated with air and tied to their shoulders.

Acre is a walled town, with a single gate on the south-east. Its trade is now much reduced, and the bazaars are deserted; the richest inhabitant is not worth £1000. The ramparts, blown up by the English in 1840, remain in ruins, and the whole place has a desolate appearance. The port was filled up in the seventeenth century,

by Fakhr ed Din, and, in the whole space between the walls and the old Crusading pier—a breadth of 700 yards east and west, by 350 north and south—the greatest depth of water is only six feet, the average being two or three. The appearance of the town outside is picturesque; with brown walls, a tower on a rock in the sea, called, from the fourteenth century downwards (and perhaps earlier), El Manâra, yellow stone houses, with two higher buildings, roofed with red tiles, and with green shutters; above all, the huge white mosque of Jezzar Pacha, a square building, with a dome and a graceful minaret, surrounded by palms, and with chambers for the students, covered by rows of little round domes; behind this, the modern fortress, on the site of the old Crusading castle.

Entering the town, I found many of the bazaars turned into cavalry stables, and only about one shop in ten inhabited. In the southern part, however, a busier scene may be witnessed.

Near the Greek convent, I found, in ruins, the tombs of two English officers, who fell in a sortie in 1799, Major Oldfield and Colonel Walker, of the Marines. The name-plate of the second had been stolen, and the whole monument was in a disgraceful condition. I afterwards had these two tombs repaired, and a new title and head-stone made by Mr. Shumacher for that of Colonel Walker, whose name I obtained from the English

Consular agent. I had them railed in, and thus protected from insult, and public proclamation was made by the Governor to cause them to be respected. Unfortunately, I have never been able to revisit them since they were repaired, though I believe they are still in good order.

The walls of Acre are of masonry, drafted after the fashion used by the Crusaders, and they probably date in part from that period. The powder magazine, blown up in 1840 by the English, is still in ruins; rusty guns are pointed in the embrasures. On the north and east are bastions with a very slight projection, a glacis, and ravelin. Two mortars were shown as left behind by Napoleon, and English cannon-balls are visible sticking in the walls of the castle.

The great mosque of Jezzar Pacha is built of materials brought from 'Athlît, Cæsarea, and Haifa. The north entrance, from the rudely-paved street leading to the castle, is flanked by a beautiful little fountain with rich lattice-work of marble. The square yard within is paved with black and white marble in bands; lofty palms grow between the paved walks, and a colonnade runs round, supported on shafts of marble and red granite, with rude capitals not originally made for the pillars. In the centre is an octagonal fountain of marble, some five feet high, surmounted by a wooden dome, once beautifully painted. The mosque within has a porch, with lofty granite

columns, capped with marble. It is a large square building, cased in coloured marble, with little cloisters on three sides, the dome above painted and whitewashed, with a gallery round the drum. The fresco-painting is much worn. An English clock is placed at each side of the door, set to Arabic time (six o'clock being noon), and standing in a high case of walnut. The Mihrab, or prayer-niche, on the south wall, is handsomely adorned with flagging of marble, and is high enough to stand in.

The Moslems were at prayer. A peasant, in a gorgeous head-shawl, a dark blue jacket, and a robe (kumbâz) of pink and white stripes, was performing the usual genuflections and prostrations. A huge wooden torch, six feet high, in imitation of the wax torches brought from Mecca (such as exist at Jerusalem in the mosque), is placed on either side of the Mihrab, and to the right is a handsome marble pulpit. A long inscription in yellow letters on a blue ground runs round the walls of the mosque. Two beautifully carved stone tombs are shown in the courtyard near the minaret; but the tomb of the founder is in the north-east corner of the town.

Passing through the crooked, narrow, ill-paved lanes of Acre, where huge camels jostle the crowd of bright-coloured peasants and Bedawin, we visited the "galères," or convict prison, so much dreaded by the natives, because hard labour

is enforced on the prisoners. The dark vaults are entered by a wooden door, from between the bars of which heads and arms were stuck out, the convicts shouting for charity—the whole scene a perfect pandemonium.

There were no less than 300 cavalry in Acre, well mounted on fine half-bred horses; but the place has no real strength, and its fortifications could not resist the attacks of modern warfare.

Acre is not a city famous in Scripture. It is noticed, indeed, under the names Accho and Ptolemais; but the Jews were not a maritime people, and it had not, therefore, in their eyes, the importance which makes it now "the key to Syria."

The Crusaders recognised at once the value of its position, and Baldwin I. besieged it, in 1103, as soon as Jerusalem was secured. The garrison were relieved by a fleet from Tyre; but, in the following year, it fell into the hands of the Christians, after twenty-five days' siege. In the disastrous year, 1187, Saladin took it without a blow; but the place was too important to be lost, and the Christians again took it in 1191. In 1229, the Knights Hospitallers settled here, whence its modern title, St. Jean d'Acre; but it was finally lost, in 1291, when the son of Kalawûn levelled it to the ground.

In its palmy days, the town contained a church

to St. Andrew, of which a few arches still remain near the sea; a second of St. Michael, now destroyed; a third of St. John, possibly now a mosque; a castle, where the modern fortress stands; a hospital of the Knights of St. John, now the military hospital; and a patriarchate, now perhaps a mosque. On the south the mole ran out south-east and east, closing in the port, and terminated by the rock and tower of El Manâra. There were two lines of wall on the north and east, and in the angle was the famous tower called "Tower of Flies," or "Maledictum," which long resisted King Richard, when besieging the town from the great mound called Turon, on the east, where also Napoleon made his attack.

There was a sort of suburb on the north, with a double wall, which now seems to have disappeared entirely, though the sea-rampart is, in all probability, Crusading work. The southern quarter of the town belonged to the Venetians, and north of them the Germans had several streets. The Templars and Hospitallers had each their Custodia; and, in the thirteenth century, the Teutonic knights had wide possessions, in the plains round Acre, and among the villages, or "casales," as they called them, of Lower Galilee.

The splendid buildings of the Christians were levelled to the ground, and the place remained desolate until 1749 A.D.

The rebuilding of 'Akka, as the town is now

called, was effected by the celebrated Dhahr el 'Amr, of the Zeidaniyîn family. The rise and fall of this famous house forms a natural parallel to that of the native Jewish ruling family of the Asmoneans. Zeidan was a chief of Arab race settled in the town of 'Arrâbeh, north of the Buttauf plain. The power of the family gradually extended, until Dhahr el 'Amr, his grandson, became virtually King of Galilee. Under this famous Sheikh, who paid no tribute, and who governed all Lower and a great part of Upper Galilee, eight districts, including 162 villages, were ruled by his eight sons. Strong forts were erected all over the country, many of which still remain, while in other cases the foundations only are visible. The mosque and Serai (or court-house) of Haifa, the castles of Shefa-'Amr, Jedin, and Seffurieh, the fortress of Deir Hanna, the walls and mosques of Tiberias, and part of the fortifications of Acre, were built by this family, while many mills and works of irrigation by the Sea of Galilee date from the same period. The country appears to have been prosperous under the rule of its native chiefs, and their buildings are remarkable for good workmanship and well-chosen positions.

But, in 1775, Dhahr, who had long been governor at Acre—where his walls still stand, with an inscription on them, giving the date of their construction—was seized and beheaded by

the cruel Bosnian Pacha called Jezzar, or "butcher," from his many murders. The old man was nearly ninety when he died. His family decayed in power, and it has been so persecuted by the Turks, that now only one representative remains, in the village of B'aîneh. From him we obtained lists of the possessions of the Zeidaniyîn, of their fortresses and towns, their mosques and public buildings, with the names of the various builders and approximate dates.

Under Jezzar Pacha, Acre again declined in prosperity. The cruelties of this governor are well known, and remembered among the people. His murder of seven of his wives, whom he beheaded with his own hand, the mutilation of his servants, and of all who offended him, are often spoken of. It was Jezzar whom Sir Sidney Smith assisted, in 1799, against Napoleon, when besieging Acre from King Richard's Hill, and the defeat of the Emperor was followed, as before noticed, by the massacre of the sick on Carmel.

Jezzar died in 1804, and, since then, Acre has had no history, excepting in 1840, when the English fleet bombarded the town, and drove out the forces of Ibrahim Pacha, who had taken it in 1832. There are many inhabitants who can well remember the short, sharp engagement, and the terrific explosion of the powder magazine, which killed 2000 Egyptians. Since this disaster, the prosperity of the place has dwindled more and

more, so that it now contains only some 8000 inhabitants. Should Palestine, however, be destined to form the theatre of future military operations, the name of Acre will no doubt be often heard again in English mouths.

CHAPTER VII.

SHARON.

THE preceding chapters bring down the history of the Survey to the end of the campaign of 1872. In the winter Mr. Drake's health became so much affected that he was obliged to try the effect of a sea voyage to Egypt. Thus, on the 1st of February, he left me alone for a month. On the 26th I marched out from Haifa, and again took the field, our intention being to fill in the broad tract of plain and low hills between Carmel and Jaffa, and from the sea to the Samaritan mountains previously surveyed.

Our first camp was at a village not marked on any map and much wanted, for it was known that a place called Geba of Horsemen, which Herod's veterans colonised, must have existed near Carmel, and here we found the required spot in the present Jeb'a at the foot of the hill.

All round us were places of interest. The village had rock-cut tombs and a fine olive grove, amongst the trees of which sat the little "boomehs" or Athenian owls only some ten inches high. By

day their peculiar cry, a sort of mew, is the only indication of their lurking-place, but by night their huge eyes can be seen in the branches.

To the north is a little ruined monastery with a garden of fruit trees by Elijah's spring; this is the Valley of Martyrs described in the last chapter, and the huge geodes, or pudding-stones, in the rock, are said to be the remains of the fruit of a former garden turned to stone by the prophet, to whom their owner refused to give them.

To the south-east we discovered a large volcanic outbreak, which appears to have been a submarine crater according to the geologist's verdict on our specimens.

To the west was 'Athlit, amongst the ruins of which we spent several days measuring and planning. This place was one of the most famous Crusading strongholds of Palestine. It was built by the Templars in 1218, and a contemporary description of their work exists. Jaques de Vitry describes the outer enceinte, the ditch and strong wall, built across the neck of the promontory, and protecting the town on the east. He notices the two great towers behind, of which only a single wall, belonging to the northern one, remains; he speaks of the church now destroyed, and of the great vaults still existing. Thus we have here a dated specimen of Gothic architecture in Palestine, and the magnificent ruins are worthy of the great order which erected the fortress. The place

was called Pilgrim's Castle by the knights, and long resisted every effort of the Moslems to capture it. Only in 1291, just before the fall of Acre, was it finally lost to the Christians, and with its capture the last hopes of the Christian dominion in the country were overthrown. The chronicler describes the huge stones, which could scarcely be dragged by a yoke of oxen, and to the wheels of the carts, which brought the blocks from the quarry for the walls, we may ascribe the deep ruts in the soft rock, on the roads leading from the quarried cliff on the east, towards the town. Here also we have proof that the Crusaders themselves hewed stones with a marginal draft and a rude rustic boss, for no old materials are used up in 'Athlît, and drafted stones occur even in the voussoirs of the pointed arches.

Just outside this position is a little fort with a rock-cut ditch and rock-hewn stables with mangers still in place. It is called Dustrey, and the name is a corruption of District or Destroit, the name of a little tower which the Templars, in 1218, found guarding a narrow passage in the rocks. The passage was called "House of Narrow Ways," and is mentioned as near the camping-ground of Richard Lion-Heart on his march southwards to Jaffa.

'Athlît then was the point where the pilgrims of the thirteenth century landed. Their road was protected for them, both towards Nazareth

and towards Jerusalem, by a chain of forts still remaining at distances of an easy day's journey.

It is curious to observe how many ancient sites the Crusaders grouped round the Pilgrim's Castle. The religious devotee was shown, as soon as he landed, no less than three famous places—ancient Tyre, Capernaum, Meon (the home of Nabal),—and probably Sarepta also; of these the true sites were separated by distances of many days' journey, in parts not held by the Christians, and one is tempted to suppose that design, rather than ignorance, was the true cause why they were so grouped. Caipha (or Haifa) just north was shown as a place where Simon Peter used to fish. 'Athlît itself was called ancient Tyre, perhaps because near a place named Tîreh, and Sarepta was possibly shown at Surafend close by. Meon was here placed because a confusion existed, in the Crusading mind, between Carmel, the city of the south of Judah whence Abigail came, and Mount Carmel, the scene of Elijah's sacrifice. But, stranger still, Capernaum was shown in the same district, for a reason which I have never been able to penetrate. The place is mentioned more than once, and Benjamin of Tudela speaks of its distance from Haifa, by means of which we are able to identify it with a village near 'Athlît, now called Kefr Lâm. Capernaum was a fortress, and remains of its towers and walls still exist; but there is nothing to show whether it was supposed to be the real

town of our Lord, or merely a place of similar name.

These places, and many other ruins of interest, lie in the narrow plain extending twenty miles south of the Carmel promontory. This plain suddenly enlarges to more than double its width, or to about nine miles, south of the Nahr ez Zerka, or Crocodile River, and a cliff above the beautiful springs, whence this stream is fed near Mâmâs, forms the end of the Carmel block. The Zerka is a deep perennial stream, fringed with rushes and full of Egyptian papyrus, forming a huge blue pool in one place where it is dammed across to collect its waters, and thence rushing down, even in autumn, in a strong stream to the sea; its mouth is guarded by a Crusading fort, and near it are the remains of a Crusading bridge. North and south of the stream there are large marshes, full of tamarisk and of tall canes. The clear springs, under the hills, are perennial, and by them are remains of a Roman theatre at Mâmâs, which has been converted later into a fortress. This stream has been known from the time of Strabo and Pliny as the Crocodile River, and in it the crocodile still exists, being, according to general native evidence, unknown in any other stream in Palestine.

On the sides of Carmel we discovered also a ruin called Semmâka, or the "Sumach tree," where are remains of what seems to me to have been undoubtedly a synagogue. The dimensions

and ornamentation of the lintel stones and pillars reproduce exactly those of the Galilean synagogues; and the place is a very likely one, as the town of Haifa has been a favourite residence of the Jews, from the time of Christ to the present day.

The district we now entered is rarely visited by travellers. The natives are savage and unruly, and the Government finds much difficulty in repressing their internal feuds. They are robbers and murderers, and we were astonished at the number of skulls and bones, in the old tombs, until we found that many were fractured, and we were told that they had belonged to persons murdered by the villagers. In one case I entered a Jewish sepulchre, the door of which was open, and found, to my horror, some six newly-interred corpses, lying on the floor in various directions, not with the right side and face to Mecca according to the proper form of sepulture among Moslems. These corpses therefore belonged apparently to strangers recently murdered.

Early in March, Drake returned and remained with us until the 1st of May, when he left for England and did not rejoin us until October. Thus, for the greater part of the year 1873, I was working with only the assistance of my excellent sergeant and corporal.

At Jeb'a we experienced another disturbance, owing to old Jack barking at the village cows and being stoned by the cowherd, which led to a

quarrel, but the Governor of Haifa was near us, and imprisoned the offender. Here also we had an accession to our party in the shape of four fine little puppies, the children of my own terrier. It was very comical to notice the dislike of Jack to his children; the morning after they were born he trotted cheerfully in to breakfast, but no sooner heard their cries than he disappeared with his tail between his legs, and never came near my tent for many months. The poor puppies were the torment of my life. At night their mother no sooner heard the jackals than she jumped out and ran off to the chase. Then feeble yelps would arise from various parts, and, though tired and stiff with long riding, I had to strike a light, and collect my puppies scattered by the sudden disappearance of their natural protector.

Later on also they required doctoring, and, when they could walk, they used to come and bite my toes under the table, whilst I was writing reports to the Committee of the Fund.

The weather was still uncertain. On the night of our arrival at Jeb'a, we had a heavy thunderstorm, and the tent being 'old, the rain came through, and I was obliged to put an indiarubber bath over my head in bed. Again on the 18th of March we had, in a single storm, no less than 1·74 inches of rain. Yet, notwithstanding this, it was a pleasant time, for the air was cool and fresh, the hills carpeted with wild flowers, and

the country round the camp full of objects of interest.

On the 21st of March we struck our tents, put our puppies in a box on a mule, and marched south to Kannîr, on the edge of the Plain of Sharon, and opposite to Cæsarea, nine miles away. Scarcely had we settled down in our new position, when on the 25th the equinoctial gales came upon us, and found us in a bare flat field, without the shelter of either houses or trees. In the middle of the night I was waked by shouts, and on lighting a candle I found half of our great tent blown in, and Drake in bed enveloped in a mass of dripping canvas. Fortunately I had my sou'-wester hat, and cloak, and boots ready, and rushing out into a deluge of rain I succeeded in releasing him. We replaced the pegs, loaded them with stones, and deepened the trenches, and were able to resist the storm; but the lesson we learned for the future was to camp among trees, about the period of the equinox.

The district west of camp was all plain, and to the east were the lower slopes of the "breezy land." Both the slopes and the plain were covered with an open forest of oaks, less dense than that on the Nazareth hills, but of finer trees; and this woodland is the last remains of the great forest of Sharon, which is mentioned by Strabo as a "mighty wood." The scenery is very pretty, and the streams, of which there are three between the

Zerka and the 'Aujeh near Jaffa (all noticed in the march of the English in 1191 under King Richard), are, even in autumn, full of water.

The famous rose of Sharon (Cant. ii. 1) as I have since endeavoured to show, is the beautiful white narcissus, so common on the plain in spring. The Jews themselves, in their Targum commentaries, so explain the word, and the modern name Buseil used by the peasantry, is radically identical with the Hebrew title in the Bible. The "lily of the valleys" is probably the blue iris which is now called Zembakîyeh in Palestine.

From Kannîr we visited the magnificent remains of Cæsarea, lying low among the broad dunes of rolling, drifted sand, and so hidden on the land side as only to be seen when within a mile of the walls. The survey of the ruins occupied nearly a week, the principal points of interest only can here be touched upon.

Cæsarea is one of Herod's cities, completed in 13 B.C. on the old site of Strato's Tower. The magnificence of Herod's work at Samaria, Ascalon, Antipatris, and above all at this seaport town, probably far surpassed that of any of the work of the kings of Israel and Judah, excepting Solomon's great walls at Jerusalem. It is instructive, therefore, to note how little is left of Herod's buildings, for if of erections so solid and large, constructed at so comparatively recent a period, there remain now but scattered fragments, surely it is most

unreasonable to expect an explorer to unearth the "Ivory House" of Ahab (even allowing this to have been a palace at all), or to recover the Calves of Bethel, and the Ark of the Covenant.

At Cæsarea we are brought face to face with another vexed question—the reliability of Josephus. Some writers have extolled the Jewish historian as a model of almost infallible veracity, but a reaction against this exaggerated view has led to a depreciation of the author, which seems to be now very general. Where authorities are so few, it is surely dangerous to underrate their value; but the question with regard to Josephus is a double one. First, did he write truthfully? secondly, is the present text free from corruption? To this we may often add the enquiry how far are arguments drawn from Whiston's faulty translation, rather than from the original Greek?

That the present text is often corrupt, there is abundant evidence to prove. That Josephus wrote descriptions which he knew to be exaggerated, it is more difficult to show. Eastern descriptions always lack the exactitude which belongs to the Western mind, and hyperbole seems to be inseparable, in Eastern thought, from elegant description. In the case of Josephus, also, personal feeling undoubtedly interferes. On visiting the spot, one cannot fail to notice how exaggerated is his description of Jotopata, which he defended, and how the ingrained conceit of the Semitic mind appears in

his account of his own doings; but at Masada we shall have cause to admire the fidelity of his detailed account of the fortress.

It must also be noticed that far greater correctness of detail is to be found (as would naturally be expected) in his descriptions of events occurring, and of places existing, during his own lifetime, and that for this reason his first production—the Wars, is far more valuable than his compilation of the Antiquities, though even in this he draws from sources other than the Old Testament.

Here at Cæsarea we have a description of the port and public buildings which contains undoubted inaccuracies. He represents the port as equal in size to the Piræus, but it measures scarcely two hundred yards across either way, whilst the famous harbour of Athens was three quarters of a mile long and over six hundred yards in breadth. Josephus also speaks of the mole on the south side of the harbour as being "two hundred feet." This can hardly mean in length, for the present measure is more than a hundred and thirty yards, and, if he means in breadth, the estimate is exaggerated, for the greatest width at present is eighty-five feet.

Thus, without taking any notice of the great length given for the stones sunk to form part of the breakwater, we find that Josephus estimates the harbour as equal to one of twenty times its capacity, and the mole at over double its real

width. It must indeed be remembered that he wrote neither at Cæsarea nor at Piræus, and that exact surveys had then no existence. Yet this case is sufficient to prove that the measurements twice given (Ant. xv. 9, B.J. i. 21) are unreliable, and the descriptions exaggerated.

In shape the port of Cæsarea was not unlike the Piræus. The southern mole was adorned with towers, and had three colossi at the end, supported on two huge blocks of stone; on the north side a reef ran out, and was also adorned with three colossi on a tower. A temple of white stone stood opposite the mouth of the port, and of this the foundations appear still to exist—a wall with niches for statues, well worthy of examination as being of white stones, whilst all the other buildings are of brown-coloured masonry. In this temple were colossal statues of Cæsar and of Rome.

An amphitheatre, still remaining, was also built, to the south by the sea, capable of holding, as Josephus says, a vast number, for its diameter is 560 feet, and it could contain 20,000 persons. The theatre appears to have been within its circuit, where it still remains, but the hippodrome, over 1000 feet long, seems unnoticed by the historian. It is to the east, and in it are the remains of a goal post of granite, a magnificent truncated cone seven feet six inches high, once standing apparently on a base, a single block of

red granite thirty-four feet long. How such blocks were moved, it is difficult to imagine ; nor was the material to be obtained in Palestine, being a fine kind of granite, so hard that the peasantry, endeavouring to cut the stele into millstones, have only penetrated a few inches into the stone.

The wall of the Roman town was traced, and found to embrace an area of four hundred acres ; but Crusading Cæsarea was much smaller, being only about thirty acres, within a rectangle of six hundred yards by two hundred and fifty.

Cæsarea was considered, after the fall of Jerusalem, to be the capital of Palestine. Sometimes it was spoken of as part of the "land" by the Jews, sometimes it was excluded. Jews, Syrians, and Samaritans dwelt in it, and the place was the scene of many bloody feuds between them. In the Talmud the port (Leminah), and the famous promenade along the mole are noticed, but I find no ancient account of the great aqueducts, which brought water to the city, otherwise supplied only by a single well. One of these is carried from springs on the Carmel hills, a distance of eight miles, on arches with a double channel, and is perhaps the finest engineering work in the country, evidently of Roman origin ; the second, or low level, brings water from the pool above the dam in the Crocodile River. The manner in which the rocky ridge along the coast is pierced, and long rock-staircases cut down to the tunnel, with the separation

of the two channels when crossing the great marshes, are indications of high scientific education in the builders. The native tradition says that the two aqueducts were made, by two daughters of a king, for a wager as to who should first convey water to the capital.

The history of Cæsarea is one of many vicissitudes. It became a bishopric in 200 A.D., and was the home of Origen and of Eusebius. The Franks took it in 1001, when the green flagon, called "the Holy Grail," was found by the Genoese. Saladin conquered it in the fatal year 1187; but its walls were again erected by Gautier d'Avesnes, in 1218, and the place was taken back by the Moslems the same year. Ten years later it was again taken, and again fell. In 1251 it was re-fortified by St. Louis; but the invincible Bibars destroyed it in 1265. The restorations of St. Louis are still plainly distinguishable from the older work of Gautier.

On the south side of the town the Crusading towers project into the sea along the great mole, and stand probably on the site of Herod's tower Drusus. On the north, the pillars of the Roman town have been used up to form a long jetty, running parallel with the reefs; and other shafts have, as at Ascalon, been built into the walls. On the top of the southern hill, within the Crusading walls, are the foundations of the fine cathedral, and to the north is a second smaller church. These are the

only public buildings which remain distinguishable, and the whole extent, within the Roman enceinte, is now but a mass of fallen masonry, excepting the dark, dismantled towers and scarps of the thirteenth-century fortress, and the shapeless tower on the mole.

In our rides to and from Cæsarea, we constantly had reason to admire the faint, harmonious colouring of the wild flowers on the untilled plain. Cæsarea was surrounded by fields of the yellow marigold, which produced a bad kind of hay-fever, and gilded our legs in riding. Ancient ruins in Palestine are, in spring, easily distinguished, by the growth of this plant, and of the marsh-mallow. Other flowers were also conspicuous—the red pheasant's-eye, in some cases as big as a poppy; blue pimpernels, moon-daisies, the lovely phlox, gladioles, and huge hollyhocks. Swarms of "painted lady" butterflies fluttered over the mallows; the hoopoes had just arrived, and were fanning their crests up and down in the oak boughs; the storks were solemnly marching over the plain; and the air was full of the white-footed lesser kestrel, also a migratory bird.

Early in April the corn was ripening under the oaks; but a great portion of the plain is covered with marshes, among which the Ghawarni Arabs, who are almost independent, have their camps. The tracks through the boggy land are known only by themselves, and the government is thus

unable to do more than inflict a poll-tax on them. Here the shaggy brown buffaloes might often be seen sunk, like hippopotami, in the deep, muddy stream, the nose and horns only visible—for the peculiar set of the neck allows the head to be extended quite horizontally, the nose, ears, and eyes in line, as in the hippopotamus.

We made diligent inquiry as to the crocodiles, and visited Abu Nûr, the miller on the river. He took us up a ladder into the loft above the mill, where we sat in state on carpets, our eyes blinded with wood-smoke, as he prepared coffee, and our ears deafened with the whirl of the mill-wheel. The old man promised to do all in his power—"Inshallah," he would get us a crocodile. He also criticised my riding-whip, which he pronounced good, but not equal to one he had seen, which could also be used as a chair and umbrella, with a sword-blade inside.

The Arabs and Turkomans of the plain are rich in flocks and herds. Long lines of the Syrian flat-tailed sheep, black goats, and small red oxen covered the plain. The rich people in the hills had sent down their horses for spring grazing, and camps were pitched, round which forty or fifty fine horses were picketed, feeding on the grass and flowers. Here also I noticed the peculiar fashion of sewing the ears of donkey colts together, to make them stand up, and of splitting the cows' ears, so that they appear to have two pairs of horns as well as ears.

On the 8th of April we moved south to Zeita, on the edge of the hills. From this camp no discoveries of much importance were made; but we visited two Crusading towers which formed fine stations in the plain—one at Kâkôn, a place mentioned, in 1160, by Benjamin of Tudela, as being the ancient Keilah; the second at Kŭlŭn-saweh (which means "mitred"), where is a beautiful hall, probably part of the Castle of Plans, built by the Templars in 1191.

From Zeita I rode, on the 14th of April, to Jerusalem to witness the Greek Easter ceremonial, and on the 22nd returned to the new camp at Mukhâlid, on the sea-coast, in company with Dr. Chaplin. We came down by the old road, through Bethhoron, visited Modin and Lydda, slept at Ramleh, and came north by Râs el 'Ain.

Dr. Chaplin's visits were always most acceptable to us, and his knowledge of the people and country rendered his suggestions very valuable. By his advice I shortly after withdrew the party from the plain, and had reason, as will be seen, to feel glad I had done so.

On one of our expeditions along the coast from Mukhâlid, we perceived, to our astonishment, unknown rocks or islands out at sea. Soon, however, I saw that our islands were moving, and came to the conclusion that they were drifting wrecks or rafts, wrecked vessels being very common all along this harbourless coast; but presently the blocks

broke up and soared into the air; they were two large flocks of pelicans, rocking on the summer sea.

The country near the coast was here all of blown sand, with scattered bushes, and, farther inland, are dunes of semi-consolidated red sandstone. Near Jaffa there are low oak-bushes, which spring from the roots of a forest, now entirely felled; and, east of our camp, an open woodland exists, with a ruin called Umm es Sûr, "mother of the wall." In this name we see probably remains of Assur, the name of a forest near the coast, through which the English and the Templars fought their way before arriving at Arsûf, during the famous march of Richard Lion-Heart.

Whilst I was occupied in inspecting a cemetery of Christian rock-sepulchres north of camp, in company with Drake and Dr. Chaplin, a dark thin man, in a blue cloak, red boots, and chocolate and yellow head-shawl, rode up. He was an Emîr, chief of the Howarith Arabs close by, and came to offer hospitality, though his hidden object I only discovered later.

In the middle of the plain his tent was pitched, among coarse grass and thistles—a low black camel's-hair cloth stretched over rude poles, and the sides closed in with reed matting. The women's apartment was on the north, shut off with matting, on the south and west the tent was open. Carpets were spread, and gay-coloured pillows strewn on the

ground. The Emîr's black slave, Sheikh Saleh, and a little black demon, his head all shaven except the *shûsheh*, or top-knot, took our horses. The Emîr was not content with our sipping coffee; he insisted on our eating salt with him. A sound of grinding arose behind the matting, and two good-looking women in the dark blue, sweeping, long-sleeved robes peculiar to Bedawîn, went off to fetch water, with large jars balanced on their heads. The elders of the tribe sat, half asleep, around us, one being remarkable for a fine pair of silver-mounted pistols.

Other guests began soon to arrive, on good grey mares. The young men were shaved, all but their mustachios, and gaily dressed, having red leather top-boots with tassels. One had baggy trousers of chocolate colour, and the usual square lambskin jacket, wool inside, which is worn in winter; in his hand was a spear, fifteen feet long. They alighted, touching head, lips, and heart to the Emîr, who clasped their hands and kissed them on each cheek. The Arabs do not, as a rule, actually kiss, but lay their foreheads together and make a sound of kissing with their mouths. We settled down to wait for dinner, only interrupted by a fight between my horse and that of a guest, which I was obliged to stop myself, as Arabs have a good deal of respect for hoofs, and prefer stoning the animals from a distance.

The Bedawîn are immensely superior to the peasantry in politeness and quietness of manner. Life in the country of the Arabs is really nearer civilisation, in many respects, than that among the villagers, and nothing is a greater error than to speak of the Bedawîn as savages. My pleasantest expeditions were always those among the "houses of hair," and with the wild Arabs we had far less difficulty in dealing than with the Fellahin.

The conversation was curious. We gave the Emîr our staple bit of astonishing information, that the English Queen had more Moslems under her rule than the Sultan; and he inquired how long we had ruled India. One of the elders disagreed with our reply, and said the English had held it only forty-five years. The Emîr made him a cutting answer, and he collapsed.

About one p.m. dinner appeared. A wooden bowl, nearly four feet in diameter, was carried in on a mat. It was piled with rice and portions of roast lamb just killed, with bread and vegetables below, and melted butter over all. We despised the three brass spoons, and, washing our right hands, boldly plunged them in, squeezing the rice into balls. A negro attended with a green glass tumbler of water. As soon as we retired, hungry Arabs slowly filled the vacant places, at the invitation of the Emîr, who only tasted a few mouthfuls until his guests were fed. The dogs licked up the scraps, and the calves walked in and

sat by us in the shade. Soap and water, coffee and tobacco followed, and we retired, sending a small tin of gunpowder to our host in the evening.

On the 30th of April, Dr. Chaplin left, and Drake went off for England, leaving me still in the plain.

The barley harvest had commenced about the 20th of April, and was being carried on round the village. It is a most peculiar sight to see the natives, squatted on their haunches, cutting the corn in small handfuls with a very short stalk, and tying each handful round. The small shocks are then removed, on the camels, to the threshing floors.

On Saturday, the 3rd of May, an adventure overtook us. Corporal Armstrong came home about eleven a.m., having been stopped by Bedawîn who had attempted to rob him. He shook his horse free, however, from the hands on his bridle, and hit one man over the head. They threatened to shoot him, but were cowed by his determination; and the thieves pronounced the leather water-bucket, on the mule, not worth taking, so they let the muleteer go also.

As soon as this was reported I sent our head man Habib over to the tents of the Emîr, who ruled another tribe. Here was the governor of the district, then making inquiries as to a camel, which had been stolen from the men whom we

hired to bring us into this lawless district. Habib returned with four Kurdish soldiers, armed to the teeth, and having *kurbashes*, or whips of hippopotamus-hide, slung to their wrists. They took our muleteer down as a guide, and brought back three prisoners in irons, and an old gun. I afterwards heard that the whole camp had been levelled to the ground, and the men flogged with the formidable whips until they gave up the culprits.

The Arabs along the coast are indeed very dangerous; one tribe is called Nefei'at, from the murderous bludgeons they carry. In subsequent travels I have seen the men on raids, marching armed through the marshes, and ready to fall upon any unwary traveller or benighted peasant journeying alone.

The true reason of the Emîr's anxiety to make friends now became apparent. Members of his tribe had stolen the camel, but he sent to remind me that I had eaten salt with him and could not suppose him guilty of conniving at such a deed. As, however, I obtained the names of the thieves, I handed them over to government; and, as I had found that mercy is a quality not appreciated by Syrians, I turned a deaf ear to the deputations of old men and women, who came again and again to my camp in the hills, rushing in suddenly and clasping my knees at unexpected moments, and even besieging the hotel-door and the landing-place at Jaffa. The adventures were also con-

tinued at Nablus where the prisoners were taken, as will be seen immediately.

Our camp was not a pleasant one; the peasantry were surly, and the Arabs dangerous. Almost every night attempts were made to steal our horses and mules, and were only frustrated by the vigilance of Habib, who lay, gun in hand, by the line of tethered animals, and fired on the thieves more than once. The place was also infested with scorpions, and I was stung by one, in six places along the leg, before I could get off my riding-breeches in which it had hidden. Habib licked the bitten places carefully, having, as he assured me, once eaten a scorpion, and thus obtained a power of healing the stings; this is a common idea among the natives; the stings were certainly less painful than on a former occasion.

The view from the Mukhâlid camp was very extensive; the Carmel ridge and the Mahrakah peak were plainly seen, with the whole broken line of the watershed blue in the distance, and white villages on little knolls, sharply defined against the shadow of the long flat curve of Ebal; the crater of Sheikh Iskander with the lower plateau to the north, was distinctly shown against the sky-line, and, yet more distant, appeared the Safed mountains and a silver thread of snow on Hermon 100 miles away. To the south, the eye roamed over low sand-dunes with patches of red

and of bright yellow, and a few scattered oaks, over corn-land, and, farthest off, was a long line of cliff, with a promontory on which the town of Jaffa was seen distinctly. Thus the panorama from Hermon to Jaffa embraced a distance of 120 miles.

The prisoners had been captured on the 3rd; on the 6th the Governor of Kŭlŭnsaweh allowed them to escape, for reasons easy to imagine, and I was obliged to appeal to our Consul in Jerusalem. On the 7th we marched up into the hills, to a place called Kefr Zîbâd, and experienced a frightfully hot sirocco. The treeless plain was scorched with heat, the flowers all dead and the corn all reaped. The grey hills, the olives, houses, and ruins, had a fossilised appearance, and, over all, a terrible leaden sky was spread; the poor dogs hid from the sun in the thorny bushes, and had to be thrown into every pond that was passed to cool them. The puppies arrived at camp so limp and feeble that I doubted if they would live.

Next day was as bad, but, on the 9th, the fresh breeze from the sea came back and the work became less arduous. The country was one scarcely visited before by Europeans, and the villagers were in some cases so terrified by our appearance and our arms, that they fled in the greatest terror; but a report got about that we were sent by the Sultan, to see which of the villages had become

ruinous, and, hence, we became favourites, and every possible ruin in the village lands was shown to us, with the greatest eagerness, as it was supposed that taxes would be remitted in proportion to the amount of desolation.

At one place called Bâka the great gig umbrella over the theodolite attracted much attention, and here, as at Kâkôn, the chief delight to elderly men was a peep through the theodolite telescope.

"What do you see, O father?" cried the less fortunate who crowded round the observer.

"I see Hammad and his cows, two hours off, as if he were close here!" replied the delighted elder.

Here also we were near Kûr, the head-quarters of another of the great native families like our old friends the Jerrâr; and the head of the house —which is called Beit Jiyûs, came to see me with some twenty followers. My knowledge of Arabic was still most rudimentary, and I found conversation very difficult; but the old man was quite happy, staring at all the European novelties and exclaiming to all he saw and heard: "O prophet! O Lord Mohammed! Mashallah!"

The business connected with our Arab prisoners now took me to Nâblus. It appeared that all the offenders had been allowed to leave prison, apparently in consequence of monetary arrangements with persons in authority; yet no sooner was it understood that I was to be expected in Nâblus, than they were recaptured and produced for me to

see. The Deputy-Governor invited me to attend their examination by the Mejlis, or Town Council, where a curious scene was presented. The Kâdi sat on a diwan, in the whitewashed room serving as a justice hall—a stout man (Kâdis become fat for a well-known reason), his eyelids drooping, his dress a long robe striped yellow and white, with a short blue cloth jacket and the huge white turban, —emblem of superior holiness and incorruptibility and by him, a thin clerk, in a red fezz and white clothes. The military element was represented by a colonel in blue, with gold sleeves, his frock-coat unbuttoned, as is usual with Turkish officers. Other members were less remarkable. Mr. Elkarey, the missionary, kindly escorted me, and interpreted for me. The majesty of the council was upheld by a guard at the door, and a smart sergeant in black would have been almost European in appearance, but for a green silk comforter over his coat.

Two prisoners, both horribly squalid in appearance, were brought up. They did not deny that they belonged to the Nefei'at, or "club-bearing Arabs." One was a very short man, his face dreadfully pitted by small-pox, and with only one eye; the second, a very tall, thin man, of a Don Quixote type of face, with beautiful white teeth. Evidence was first taken of the two together, then of each separately, by which means their various versions were made to prove contradictory. The

tall man wept and wrung his hands; the little man held up a corner of his shirt, and shook it, to testify his innocence, repeating many times that he "feared God." The Kâdi inquired whether they were Howareth dogs, Belauneh dogs, or Nefei'at dogs, and invoked destruction on most of their relations. The other councillors shouted all at one time, and some stood up on the diwan, after which fresh pipes and coffee were brought. A witness was called, and, while he was coming, the case of a big miller and his man was taken up; and in the middle of it in came the old high-priest of the Samaritans, looking like Moses in Millais' picture, attired in coffee colour, with the crimson turban, and accusing a debtor of defrauding him of a shilling, which the latter denied, winking at the judge in secret. Presently the Vice-Governor came in, a man of peculiarly sanctimonious appearance, and notoriously corrupt. The shouting was then redoubled, three cases apparently being all tried and decided at once.

The scene was a farce as far as justice was concerned, but the policy which always appeared to me best, was to insist only on imprisonment, and to make sure this was actually enforced, leaving it to the authorities to inflict some sort of monetary punishment, without my asking for fines, well knowing that, once in prison, a Syrian does not get out without paying something to somebody. This line of conduct made us quite popular with

some governors, whose incomes were ridiculously small.

On Friday, the 23rd of May, we again marched south, and suffered even more than in the last move. First of all, no camels could be got, until the Sheikh of the village had been solemnly warned of the result of disobeying the Sultan's firman; then, all the long day through, a scorching sirocco blew from the east, and the road was almost impassable, across valleys a thousand feet deep, including the great boundary of Kânah. My terrier rode on the pommel, and for a great part of the way I had to carry two puppies also. At length, late in the afternoon, we arrived at Bidieh, in a state of collapse. The mules came soon after, with poor Jack slung across the cook's donkey, head down. He survived only a few hours, and he lies buried under the olive-trees by our camp, with a great stone cairn over his remains. Nearly every native suffered with ulcerated throat, from the effects of drinking too much water while exposed to the wind. Our poor little Kurdish soldier was, on the following day, reduced to tears by the death of his horse, and, in the plain, many people were killed by sunstroke. The heat was even worse next day, the glass being over 106° F. in the shade; at Gaza, the same day, it stood at 118°, while in Beyrout most of the mulberry-trees were killed by the wind, and the silk crop failed. On the third day, the Sunday, I was

waked in the afternoon by a churning noise, and saw a whirlwind coming rapidly through the olive-grove towards the camp, tearing up the thorny plants, the stubble, dust, and small stones, whilst all round a dead calm prevailed. Fortunately, its path was to one side of the tents, and it passed by without doing any damage. Next morning the fresh west wind returned, and surveying became once more a possibility.

The country round us was some of the wildest in Palestine. The villagers had never before seen a Frank, and on the maps it is almost a blank. The hills were stony, but very fine groves of beautiful old olive-trees existed all round the villages.

Here, on the 30th of May, I received an addition to the party, by the arrival of Corporal Brophy, R.E.; but his services did not become really of assistance during this campaign, as he had to learn to ride first, and to pick up a little of the language.

Many fine ruins existed round us, showing that it is probably to the agency of man, rather than to the gradual action of weather, that the utter destruction of ruins in more accessible parts of Palestine is to be ascribed. Thus my time was occupied, day and night, with visiting and planning various places of interest, tombs, monasteries, towers, etc., keeping pace with the geographical Survey by sheer hard work.

A good instance of the valuable finds made by the Survey party in this unknown district, is that of the ruin called Deir Serûr. Here we discovered the site of an important town, with public buildings of good masonry, and rock-cut tombs, evidently a place of great importance. This conspicuous site is not marked on any modern map, nor described by any previous traveller, so far as I have been able to find. On a map of the last century, an episcopal town of the fifth century called Sosura, is, however, shown in just the position of this ruin of Serûr, and the character of the buildings seems to agree with this identification.

At Kurâwa we found also a rock-cut sepulchre, with a classic façade, rivalling any of those at Jerusalem, and apparently to be attributed to the first or second century of the Christian era; yet, on this fine monument, there is not a single letter of inscription to tell the names of its former occupants. These are but single instances of the large number of interesting discoveries, in central Palestine, which are stored up in the memoir of the map.

During one of these expeditions, in company with a very plucky little Kurdish soldier, I was examining some tombs, when I suddenly found a ring of armed men round me. Nothing afraid, my Bashi-Bazouk ran at the nearest, and pelted them with stones, whereupon they all disappeared.

There is something most "uncanny" in the way in which you may ride through such places, apparently quite deserted, though if, as now happened to us, a saddle-bag drops off, it will disappear in a few moments, as if snatched by invisible hands. Our mule ran away on this occasion, and disappeared; it was found the next day, hidden in a cave. Another old mule (a great character) got into the habit of breaking his halter as soon as he had breakfasted, and running away till dinner-time, when he came home. His name was Abu S'aîd, "Father of Happiness," but he was far from bringing happiness to Habib, who owned him.

On the 3rd of June we moved again south, and crossed the most difficult valley we had yet encountered. It was nearly a thousand feet deep, and only a narrow goat-walk led down its precipitous sides, above which hangs the fine ruin called Deir Kŭl'ah, the "Convent Castle."

This valley forms the boundary between Judea and Samaria, and runs into the plain near Râs el 'Ain. We were obliged to follow its course westward for some distance before it became possible to take the pack-animals up the other side.

Our new camp at Rentîs was in more open ground, and but little remained to be done in order to join on to the old limits of the Survey on the south. A hole in the work was, however, here left in the plain which weather forbade our attempting to fill in, and, as nearly all our horses

were laid up with sore-back and lameness, the summer rest, which we had now earned, came none too soon to save the party from demoralisation.

Two places of great interest came within our district from the Rentis camp, namely, Tibneh, in the hills to the east, and Râs el 'Ain to the west, the first supposed by some to represent Timnath Heres, the burial-place of Joshua; the second, Antipatris, built by Herod the Great.

Tibneh is a ruined site on one of the great Roman roads from Lydda and Râs el 'Ain to Jerusalem. A mound, or Tell, stands on the south bank of a deep valley, surrounded with desolate mountains; by it, a clear spring issues from a cave; to the south-west is a beautiful oak-tree, the largest I saw in Palestine, called by the natives Sheikh et Teim, "the Chief, the Servant of God." South of the Tell, the hillside is hollowed out with many tombs, most of which are choked up. One of these has a porch with two rude pilasters, and along the façade are over two hundred niches for lamps; the trailing boughs of the bushes above hang down picturesquely, and half cover the entrance. Within there are fifteen Kokim, or graves, and, through the central one, it is possible to creep into a second chamber, with only a single Koka. Other tombs exist farther east, one having a sculptured façade; but the tomb described is the one popularly supposed to be that of Joshua.

It seems to me very doubtful how far we can rely on the identity of the site with that of Timnath Heres. It is nearly certain that this is the place held by Jerome to be the true site, and then called Timnathâh, a town of importance, capital of a district in the hills, and on the road from Lydda to Jerusalem. Its position is fixed by references to surrounding towns. St. Jerome also states that in his day the tomb of Joshua was there shown; and we have a relic, probably, of the tradition, in the name of the sacred oak. On the other hand, the Jewish tradition, and also that of the modern Samaritans, points to Kefr Hâris, as described in a previous chapter. The comparison of many other instances indicates invariably the greater reliability of the indigenous Jewish tradition, when differing from that of the early Christians; and there cannot well be any objection on the score of the modern character of the buildings at Kefr Hâris, for the same might be said of the tomb of Joseph, the identity of which is not generally questioned. It is remarkable, however, that a village called Kefr Ishw'a, or "Joshua's hamlet," exists in the immediate neighbourhood of the ruin of Tibneh.

With regard to Antipatris, we have fortunately far greater certainty; but the place is of less interest, being mentioned in the Bible only as the limit of St. Paul's night journey from Jerusalem (Acts xxiii. 31). It was well known in the fourth

century, but its site was lost to the Crusaders, who identified it at Arsûf, the ancient Apollonia, where also the more ignorant supposed Ashdod to have stood. It is only within the last twenty years that attention has been directed to the true site.

Josephus describes Antipatris as a city in the plain, close to the hills, in a position well watered, with a river encompassing the city, and with groves of trees. Now, as there is but one river in the plain of Sharon, anywhere near the required part, and as there is on that river but one important ancient site, surrounded by water and near the hills, we can have little doubt as to the locality of the town, first apparently identified by the late Consul Finn, in 1850; but, in addition to this, we have, in the old itineraries, various measurements to surrounding places which, though not quite exact, still serve to indicate the same site. They are as follows:

		R.M.		R.M.
Antipatris to	Galgula (*Kalkilia*)	6,	measures	$6\frac{1}{2}$
„	Lydda	10,	„	$11\frac{1}{2}$
„	Betthar (*Tireh*)	10,	„	$9\frac{1}{4}$
„	Cæsarea	28,	„	$30\frac{1}{2}$

These measurements on the Survey bring us to the ruined site of Râs el 'Ain, a large mound covered with ruins, from the sides of which, on the north and west, the River 'Aujah (the Biblical

Mejarkon, or "yellow water"), gushes forth, a full-sized stream.

A confusion has arisen between Antipatris and a town called Caphar Saba, in consequence of the loose description, given by Josephus, of a ditch dug by Alexander Balas, "from Cabarzaba, now called Antipatris," to Joppa (Ant. xiii. 15, 1); but the same author afterwards explains that Caphar Saba was a district name, applied to the plain near Antipatris (Ant. xvi. 5, 2).

In the Talmud, the two towns, Antipatris and Caphar Saba, are both noticed in a manner which leaves little doubt that they were separate places. Of Antipatris, we learn that it was a town on the road from Judea to Galilee, the boundary of "the Land" on the side of Samaria; and, as I have noted above, the great boundary valley actually runs into the plain at this point. But while Antipatris was a Jewish city, Caphar Saba was in the district which was considered foreign ground, as within Samaritan territory, and an idolatrous tree existed there, perhaps now represented by the great sacred tree at Neby Serâkah, close to Kefr Sâba, five and a half miles north of Râs el 'Ain.

Antipatris, with two other places, Jishub and Patris, is mentioned as a station at the entrance to "the King's Mountain," as the Jews called the Judean hills. This agrees with its situation at the base of the hills, the other places

being, perhaps, Sûfîn and Budrus, in the same district.

The site thus fixed, by the Survey measurements, is one naturally better fitted for an important town than any in the district. The name has indeed vanished, being a Greek title derived from that of Herod's father, and always awkward to the mouths of the natives; but the stream, the mound of ruins, and the neighbouring hills, remain; the deep blue pools of fresh water well up close beneath the hillock, surrounded by tall canes and willows, rushes, and grass. A sort of ragged lawn extends some two hundred yards southwards, and westwards the stream flows rapidly away, burrowing between deep banks, and rolling to the sea, a yellow, turbid, sandy volume of water, unfordable in winter, and never dry, even in summer.

The ruins of Herod's city are now covered with the shell of a great Crusading castle. The knights seem to have taken the name Mirr, or "Passage," applied to a hamlet near the ford, and transformed it into Mirabel, by adding "bel," a word which occurs in the names of several of their fortresses, such as Belfort, Belvoir, etc. The castle is flanked with round towers, and resembles that of Capernaum (near 'Athlît), on a larger scale. It was here that Manasseh, the cousin of Queen Melisinda, was besieged, in 1149, by Baldwin III., and obliged to capitulate. In 1191 Mirabel was dismantled by Saladin, on the ap-

proach of King Richard, in common with Plans, Capernaum, and many other castles; nor does it appear to have been subsequently restored.

The Survey operations were now suspended for a time, owing to the great heat and the exhaustion of the party, and a holiday in the Anti-Lebanon was prescribed by Dr. Chaplin. The rate of the work had been increased by nearly one-half in the second campaign; but the reorganisation which I was able to effect during our holiday soon resulted in a progress still more rapid, and, as will be seen later, my time was also profitably spent in acquiring a more scientific knowledge of the language, which became highly important on the lamented death of my fellow-workman Mr. Drake.

The fatigue of the campaign had been very great. My eyes were quite pink all over, with the effects of the glare of white chalk; my clothes were in rags, my boots had no soles. The men were no better off, and the horses also were all much exhausted, suffering from sore-back, due to the grass diet. The rest, however, soon restored our energies, and autumn found us once more impatient to be in the field.





CHAPTER VIII.

DAMASCUS, BAALBEK, AND HERMON.

THE order of the narrative now takes us away from Palestine itself, to the more northern parts of Syria, where the Survey party spent the months of July, August, and September, recruiting their health, and arranging the field-work.

On the morning of June the 16th, 1873, we arrived in the Bay of Beyrout, and landed, just as Midhat Pacha left the harbour having been superseded, in the post of Governor of Syria, in favour of Hallet Pacha. The praises of Midhat as an able, upright, and liberal statesman were in the mouths of all European residents, and his dismissal was sincerely regretted.

Beyrout is called the "Paris of the Levant," and is the most civilised place in Syria, with a population of over seventy thousand souls. It is a long and rather straggling town, of white houses, with roofs of brown tiles and green Venetian blinds, which give it quite an Italian air. To the north stretch long vine terraces; to the south is the fine college of the American Mission. Coffee-

houses, on wooden piles, project into the water, and behind, on the east, are the steep spurs of Lebanon, running down sheer into the sea by the Dog River. An English engineer has lately supplied Beyrout with good drinking water from this stream, but what becomes of the surplus of the water thus furnished is a mystery, for there is only one drain in all the town, and that is but fifty yards long. As, however, the soil is a light sand, perhaps the water filters away of itself.

The streets are good, and fit for carriages, and the scenes presented on the principal thoroughfares are gay and lively; the usual mixture of the Oriental and the European, of native dress and the outrageous imitation of Paris fashions, which is peculiar to the Levantine seaports, is specially remarkable. The public buildings—here a Gothic church, there a mosque and minaret—present the same queer mixture. The only road in Syria fit for wheeled vehicles leads from Beyrout, over one of the Lebanon passes to Damascus, being the property of a French Diligence Company.

Beyrout had, however, for me, but little attraction. Viewed as a civilised town, it could not but be considered very inferior; and, from an antiquarian point of view, it has not much of interest to recommend it, excepting the great rock tablets above the Dog River. I was anxious, as soon as our baggage animals were sufficiently rested after the long land journey from Jaffa, to proceed

to a far more interesting place—namely, Damascus. During my week's stay, I had been hospitably entertained by various residents, including the Vice-Consul, Mr. Jago, whose acquaintance I had already made, and Dr. Thomson, the well-known author of the "Land and the Book." I also visited the Consul-General, Mr. Eldridge, in his summer retreat in Lebanon, and spent a most pleasant afternoon. The scenery which lies between his house at 'Aleih and the plain of Beyrout, is some of the finest that we observed; deep and romantic ravines, cliffs with jagged outlines, ruins and scattered villas, dark clumps of umbrella-pine, and bright, mellow, green vineyards, long terraces of mulberries on the red sand of the plain, all contrasting pleasantly with the tame barren hills, amongst which we had been living for months.

On Tuesday, the 24th of June, I set out, at the head of my party, on a march to Damascus, along the French road. We wound slowly up the sides of Lebanon, here covered with pines, and veiled above with fleecy clouds, which, when the wind blows from the sea, gather daily on the summits, and swell the grapes by a soft damp mist, giving great potency to the Lebanon wine. Arriving at a height of over three thousand feet, we lost sight of the plain and the white city, and marched on in the mist until two p.m., only resting at a little mud cottage, where was a stream of icy water. We then began to descend, and beneath us was

spread out one of the finest views in Syria. The broad flat plain of the Litany River separates the two ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, and runs north and south, with the river in the middle. The outline of Anti-Lebanon was beautifully varied, with a long succession of blunt peaks, rolling ridges, knife-edged spurs, divided by deep narrow ravines, the whole bathed in the soft bright afternoon sunlight; some hills were thin and blue in the distance, some rocky and rugged in front, while the shadows were already creeping slowly up the feet of the mountains and across the plain. The Bukei'a, as the plain itself is called, was all yellow with corn, the white road, skirted by tall poplars, running across it; and, on the south, the background was formed by the dark ridge of Hermon, on which a solitary streak of snow still remained.

In a couple of hours we reached the plain, the horses being much fatigued, and one unfit for riding. We remained for the night at a miserable wooden house at Stûra, supposed to be an hotel, and kept by a Greek, and his wife, an ex-ballet-dancer, Italian by birth. I have a lively remembrance of the wretched dining apartment with a glass door, one pane of which was gone and replaced by a piece of calico; over the dinner-table two swallows had made their nests in the roof. Various mangy pointer dogs walked in, but were valiantly expelled by my puppies. In the bedroom was another swallow's-nest, and I was amused, in the

morning, by watching the old bird finding her way over the top of the half-closed door, bringing in flies, to the white-beaked little monsters, who screamed incessantly over my head.

On the first day we had ridden twenty-nine miles in seven hours. We were now once more in the saddle by 7.30 a.m., and accomplished forty-one miles in eight hours (including stoppages), the baggage animals also arriving at Damascus the same day.

Our way lay at first across the plain, which is well watered, and covered with corn-fields. Herds and flocks and black Arab tents were visible everywhere; the storks were still abundant, their long necks stretched out above the barley, and their shadows sailing along, as they wheeled above in great circles, before leaving for the north; the swallows, also, sat in long rows on the telegraph wires. Soon, however, after crossing the river, we began to enter the pass of Wâdy el Kurn, and the bare grey hills, steep crags, and wilderness of lentisk, succeeded the more fertile scenery of the Bukei'a. Here were no signs of animal life, beyond an occasional eagle or vulture. The old yellow diligence, with three mules at the pole and three horses in front, rumbled past us down the hill. Soon a rocky range, with castellated crags, appeared in front, and we ascended hills of glaring white chalk, with here and there a black basaltic seam; at length the top of a poplar appeared in

front, and we rested, for nearly an hour, by a mud stable, near a beautiful spring in the yellow rocks, round which the ruddy-coloured little oxen lay, chewing the cud, in blazing sunlight.

Our mules caught us up, with the servants riding on them,—a string of seven animals, on four of which four white terriers were seated, each carried by a native, to the great astonishment of every one along the road. Soon after, the great Kurdish colley-dog, whom we had bought in the winter for a shilling, limped in quite exhausted, and was, by my order, hoisted on to the biggest mule, where he lay quiet for the remaining twenty miles.

The country grew yet more barren as we advanced—a succession of rolling hills of an ochre colour, with here and there a steep grey crag. About two p.m. we arrived at a barren plateau, across which the road led—a streak of blinding white. In front was a range of steep hills like those left behind; great black shadows came sliding down the slopes, and so along the plain and up the eastern ridges; behind were banks of fleecy cloud, but above us a broiling sun and cloudless heaven, while before us not a trace of Damascus was to be seen. It was, indeed, wearisome work, toiling over this plateau, uncheered by any distant view of the goal, and with the apparent necessity of climbing another mountain range; great, therefore, was my relief when the road dived suddenly down into a narrow winding valley.

The scenery now became very remarkable, resembling most that of a Sinaitic oasis. The crags on either side were glaring in the sun, reddish-yellow in colour, without even a bush or shrub on the slopes, and with an intensely blue sky above; but below them, in the valley, the road led beside a swirling stream, which ran rapidly over boulders and pebbles, under the cool shadow of tall poplar groves, and gardens of cool, green foliage. The grass grew rank beside the path, trailing vines, peaches, plums, and other fruit-trees flourished on either bank. A paradise was, in short, set in a frame of most barren desert, an oasis between bare crags of sun-scorched limestone. The white road wound down the valley, which became constantly more luxuriant, whilst the hills grew higher and glared more desolate. On every side tributary streams gushed down, and we began to pass by white villas, with primitive frescoes on the walls, by groups of veiled ladies on white donkeys, and by rich merchants on fine mares. At last the valley opened, and our cavalcade, of seven horsemen, came cantering down an avenue of poplars, until, turning a sharp corner, we came suddenly in sight of the entrance to Damascus.

This approach to the city is not favourable to a just appreciation of its peculiar beauties. In front of the houses there is a sort of green, covered with short grass, and divided by the river. A large

white mosque, with two tall minarets, was in front, and the castle to the right; but no great wall, as at Jerusalem, bounds the city, which has, in spite of domes and minarets, rather the appearance of a straggling village of mud houses, with windows of wood lattice, flat mud roofs, and overhanging upper storeys.

We stopped at the hotel, and at once became acquainted with the real glory of Damascus—namely, its interiors. The house was built round an ample paved court, its inner walls of stucco, painted in horizontal bands of white, red, and blue. In the centre was a large square basin, surrounded by little jets, whence the water trickled slowly. It was shaded by tall lemon and orange trees, peaches, and plums. On one side of the court opened the diwân, a cool, lofty apartment, with raised floors surrounded by low sofas, and with an octagonal fountain in the narrow central passage. The roof of this central part was more lofty, and clerestory windows let in a subdued light. The diwân walls were of marble, and the roofs of inlaid woodwork, gorgeously painted on a dark brown ground.

On Friday, the 27th, we set up our camp, in a shady garden near the river, and enjoyed the coolness and the fruit. I was, however, afflicted with ophthalmia, consequent on the exposure, for the last few months, to the sun in a white chalk district, and for several days I could hardly see at all.

Damascus is an oval town divided into two unequal portions, the largest to the south, by the river Barada (the ancient Abana). The houses appear to be principally of mud, or sun-dried brick, with wooden frames; but the public buildings and better private dwellings are of stone. The bazaars form the heart of the town, and ramify in various directions. To Europeans there is something very curious in the collection of fifty or sixty small shops, in one street, all selling the same article. Thus, from the meat-market one strolls into a long, covered lane, where red and yellow slippers are sold; thence into the fragrant scent bazaar, or to the grimy silversmiths' smithies, or to the long rows of shops where silks and embroidered stuffs are sold. Each salesman sits calmly, on the raised floor of the little pigeon-hole, surrounded by shelves on which his goods are packed, smoking his V-shaped water-pipe, or engaged in prayer, and apparently quite indifferent as to custom.

The bazaars are delightfully cool and shady, and the absence of wheeled vehicles makes them very quiet. They are very narrow, and consequently much crowded. Huge camels, loaded with firewood, come rolling by, and oblige you to crouch against the wall to avoid the sweep of the load.

Ladies in long veils, white, or checked with blue, with embroidered edges, walk by in huge yellow knee-boots, or slippers with a sort of thick-

soled leather golosh drawn over them. Some are mounted on the white donkeys, which have a thick protuberance to the two sides of their necks—a sort of fold running sometimes all along the back. The saddles on which they are perched aloft, with their feet in front over the animal's neck, are of red morocco and velvet.

The peasants wear blue, baggy trousers, gathered in at the knee. The Maronite women, with rich apple-red cheeks, have a black band bound over the forehead. Among these the fierce Bedawîn are mingled, dark and dusky in complexion, gaunt and stealthy in mien. The broad-shouldered and moustachioed Kurds are again quite distinct, and contrast with the ghastly faces and weakly figures of the townsmen born—the fanatical Softas and Ulema, in their long pale gaberdines and scanty white turbans, incarnations of narrow bigotry and ignorant hate. The bazaar is roofed in, with openings at intervals, and the ever-changing crowd is dimly visible in the shadow, or lit up by a beam of sunlight from the roof.

The great charm of the scene consists in its unmixed Oriental character. No French fashion or Gothic building destroys the general effect. You walk in the Damascus of the "Thousand Nights and a Night," and the grim story of the wooden roof-prop at the corner, from which you may chance any day to see a criminal hanging, reminds

you of the justice of Haroun-er-Rashid. Here, through a grating, you look in on the tomb of Saladin's brother, under its green pall; there, into the cool court of a khan, or the outer chamber of a bath. Dark-eyed beauties, who are not ashamed to show their tattooed faces and nose-rings, meet you at every corner; and, if you know the city well, you may penetrate into the recesses of the wicked bath-houses, or visit the slave-market. Damascus is still the scene of intrigue and passion, as of old; the yearly poisonings are incredibly numerous, and the place is one of the chief strongholds of that obstinate fanaticism, which refuses to see anything good in the manners and civilisation of the "heathen."

The great mosque epitomises the history of Damascus. Once a heathen temple, then a Christian church, it is now a Moslem sanctuary. By a covered street with a great fountain beside it, we arrived at the bronze gates on which the Sacramental cup is twice repeated, with Arabic inscriptions nailed on above. The enclosure is not as large as that of the Jerusalem Sanctuary; the mosque stretches for 800 feet along the south side, and is about 300 wide. The court is paved, with a central fountain beneath a dome, where Moslems wash before prayer. Broad cloisters run round the court, supported on classic columns.

The building itself is divided by columns into a

nave and aisles, and the floor covered with carpets. Four *mihrabs*, or apses, for prayer, are made in the south wall, belonging to various sects, and each is flanked by huge wax torches from Mecca. A long row of worshippers stood before the central *mihrab*—soldiers and civilians, old and young, facing the wall and praying together, led by a Sheikh with a melodious voice.

An old water-carrier brought us sweet water from the holy well of the Prophet Yahyah (John the Baptist), to the east of the mosque. The whole sanctuary is whitewashed; but patches of the old glass mosaic, which once covered all the walls, are still visible, and the effect must formerly have been highly magnificent.

The mosque has three minarets—that of the Bride to the north, a square, blue tower, from the upper gallery of which four stout Muedhens were chanting, in beautiful time and shrill falsetto notes, the call to prayer, a cry which can be heard like a bell over the entire city. The second minaret is that of "Our Lord Jesus"—a slender grey needle, upon the summit of which the Moslems believe that Christ will descend in the last day. We ascended the third minaret, in the south-west corner, by a winding stair of one hundred and ninety steps, leading to a wooden gallery, whilst forty more lead up to a narrow ledge beneath the little dome.

From this point a really characteristic view

presented itself. On every side was a flat expanse of mud roofs, only broken here and there by a little white-washed dome, and set in a dense rich belt of deep green, extending for a mile from the houses on every side. Beyond the gardens were ranges of hills, barren and desolate, brown and white in colour, and terminated by the steep Hermon ridge.

The charm of the view, however, was due to the interiors. Each house was built round an open court, with a cool central fountain, and with green trees, some of great size, overtopping the roof. The courts were paved with marble, and galleries of carved woodwork ran round them; the walls were banded in courses of black and white marble, or coloured blue and red. Above the roofs rose the countless minarets, in endless variety; some blue or green, square and squat; others of beautiful grey stone, with richly ornamented stone pendents, wood lattices, and Arab or Cufic inscriptions; some whitewashed and crowned with a sort of snuffer-shaped roof, others domed. Bristling against the green bed in which the mud city lies, they gave a rich variety of effect, which is lost in the narrow lanes or roofed bazaars.

Damascus is a centre of the faith, second only to Mecca. The Greek cathedral is hustled into a corner and guarded by a great white minaret. A second great mosque is built on the west, outside the town, its architect having lost his head for so

placing it, to be given back to him—so says the grim Arabic inscription—when the sanctuary stands in the middle of Damascus. On the west of the town is a brown fortress, outwardly formidable, inwardly a ruin—fit emblem of Turkish rule.

From the silversmiths' bazaar we visited the exterior of the southern wall of the mosque, jumping over a narrow street, and running along the house-roofs. Here we found a fine Byzantine doorway, with a well-carved cornice, and along its frieze the famous Greek inscription: "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."

On the 4th of July we left this fascinating city for the cooler retreat in the mountains, where the English Vice-Consul was staying. Passing once more up the narrow valley, with its green groves amid desolate crags, we crossed the Saharah, or desert plateau, and, diverging towards the right, we made for a fine gorge, with high precipices. The Barada, a clear, broad, green stream, here comes slipping rapidly down over ledges of rock and through deep pools, and by its channel is the mud village called Sûk Wâdy Barada. The river makes a sudden bend at the gorge, and passes between high rocks, burrowed with tombs, which are in many cases inscribed with barbarous Greek texts. The river falls over a low precipice,

and forms a broad pool—a delightful bathing-place, reminding me on each visit of Naaman's boast about this very river, "better than all the waters of Israel." A more picturesque spot than this gorge, with its Roman road cut in the cliff, its cemetery, its tall poplars and rushing stream, its crags, above which is the traditional tomb of Abel, we did not again meet. This place is the ancient Abila, and its name is still recognisable in the tradition of Abel's tomb, where, after carrying the corpse for a hundred years, Cain was allowed to lay it down. On the 24th of July we revisited the gorge, and inspected the antiquities. A tablet, cut in the side of the precipice above the ancient road, identifies the town as Abila, and is repeated again a little farther on; below it is an aqueduct tunnel, and lower down the valley, on the left bank opposite the village, are remains of a small temple. On this visit we discovered no less than six inscriptions previously unknown, all on tomb-stones.

Crossing the stream, just above the waterfall, by a single arch, we continued along the left bank. The Barada has worn a deep bed, and on either side the remains of petrified leaves and stems are visible in the rude conglomerate of the banks. The stream pours over boulders and broken blocks, and is half covered with luxuriant bushes. Gradually ascending, the road leads into the long plain of Zebdâny—a sort of repetition of the Stûra

plain on a smaller scale, flanked on the west by the ragged and castellated ridges of the Anti-Lebanon, and on the east by a range of equal height. The plateau is bare and treeless, except towards the north, where are groves of poplar. Through the centre runs the river, its course marked by green bushes. In the middle of the plain it springs up suddenly from a huge blue pool, or small lake, of unfathomable depth, resembling the springs of Antipatris mentioned in the last chapter. The stream is here actually broader than at the gorge, and emerges in full volume from the earth. The basin is of hard yellow rock. At first the stream is sluggish, the banks clayey and grassy, fringed with tall canes; and the water of the pool is full of fish and frequented by water-fowl; lower down, however, the fall is very rapid, and, from the gorge to Damascus, the current is extremely quick.

The western mountains were already dark in the blue afternoon shadow, as we began to climb the white slopes to the east of the plain. Here, at a height 5000 feet above the sea, our summer camp was to be fixed, at the village of Bludân, below the Consul's house.

Most cordial and kind was the welcome which awaited us, both from Mr. Kirby Green, the Consul, and his wife, as well as from the Rev. W. Wright, the Protestant Missionary; and I shall always remember, with the greatest pleasure, the

time I spent there and the kindness which we received.

Our camp was fixed in an orchard—a stony field—almost the only level plot in the neighbourhood. Our office was a low mud room in the village. Here also I found a teacher, an intelligent young Damascene, from whom I acquired as much knowledge of Arabic as could be gained in three months of daily study—sufficient for the Survey and for colloquial purposes.

On the 11th of August the Consul rode down to Damascus, accompanied by Mr. Wright and myself. On this occasion I was able to see something of Damascus by night, guided by the missionary, and in the afternoon we penetrated into one of the slave-markets, ascending a rickety staircase to a miserable wooden verandah, on to which the little rooms opened. In one chamber was a negress, seated on a straw mat, gaily dressed, and dandling a small black baby. She seemed in very good spirits; but her next-door neighbour was nursing a sick child, and looked unhappy enough. In a third room were three negresses, and a white girl, pale and thin, who, instead of greeting us in the jovial manner of the black women, drew her veil round her and fled into an inner chamber. Theoretically, the purchase of fresh slaves is forbidden in the Turkish dominions; but there are two of these slave establishments in Damascus—one just behind or in a

mosque—and newly-imported slaves from Africa arrive here every year.

On the following day I was honoured by Hallet Pacha, Governor-General of Syria, with an invitation to accompany the Consul to breakfast. About ten a.m., we drove through the bazaar, and arrived at the Pacha's house, on a terrace above the green meadow, west of the town. A tent was spread in the garden, and the Governor, a man of immense corpulence, sat on a velvet sofa within. His staff sat round, wearing red fezzes and black frock-coats.

The Pacha belonged to the Old Turkish party, and cordially hated all "pagans." The breakfast was studiously Oriental in character, no French dishes being allowed, and no wine offered. A huge brass tray, on a plain wooden stand, formed a table for eight people. Among the guests were Mohammed S'aid Pacha—the fierce Kurd who broke in the mountaineers of Nâblus for the Turks—Holo Pacha, and other dignitaries. The first course consisted of tomato soup and macaroni, with lemons; rissoles of rice, and mutton cutlets in bread-crumbs followed, with little dishes of caviar, and bowls of leben, or sour milk, with cucumbers; next came a kind of sweet muffins; then six dishes of various vegetables, stuffed with rice, and a broiled chicken; last of all, a huge pilau, and dessert of figs and melons.

Though hungry at first, I was quite unable

to eat a quarter of the amount consumed by the Pacha, and ceased to wonder at the almost universal obesity of the Turkish dignitaries. The guests all ate from their hands; and the conversation was such as would not be countenanced in an ordinary barrack-room, though apparently much enjoyed by the Pacha and his staff.

To suppose this picture to be universally characteristic of Turkish high life would no doubt be an error; able and honest men are not altogether wanting, among the Government officials of high standing, and Midhat Pacha, the immediate predecessor of my host, has since become famous as a patriot and statesman; but it is the misfortune of Turkey, that the majority of the governing class are men ignorant and fanatical, sensual and inert, notoriously corrupt and tyrannical, who have succeeded only in ruining and impoverishing the countries they were sent to govern.

On the 19th of August, the whole party proceeded, from Bludân, on a visit to Baalbek, where I was ordered to report on the condition of the ruins.

Descending from our mountain camp, we rode north-west, over the well-watered plain, with its long rows of poplars, narrow strips of green turf along the streams, and long vineyards, with vines trained into little bushes, as in Burgundy. Thence we ascended a rugged path over the grey rocky slopes of Anti-Lebanon, and our view extended over the broad brown Bukei'a, and as far as the

long gleaming ridge of Lebanon, "the milk-white mountain," the outline of which is broken by cones and rounded tops, whilst below a dusky fringe of brushwood creeps up the slopes. After five hours' riding, we began to descend, over downs of blinding white chalk, to the great plain, and at length came in sight of a village, lying low in an oasis of green trees, with a fine spring to the east, from which ran a stream fringed with willows and poplars.

The village, or town, of Baalbek is extensive and flourishing. At the gate of the governor's house a fine statue, of colossal size, headless, and seated between sculptured lions, has been placed in a corner of the road. Passing through the main street, we rode on, between dry-stone walls, in a narrow lane, which had a perfect screen of poplars above; and, behind this, rose a huge tawny fortress-wall, like that of the Temple at Jerusalem; while, to the right, stood a little temple, staggering, as it were, after the last earthquake, the joints of the magnificent masonry yawning, and the columns and cornices bending over. The great wall is crowned by a Saracenic battlement, with loopholes, and its masonry is a perfect patchwork; but below, the ancient drafted ashlar, with Greek masons' marks on the stones, remains intact.

We now found ourselves riding, three abreast, through a dark tunnel of huge masonry, and looked back on the green paradise of foliage;

while in front a glaring dust-heap indicated the ascent into the great enclosure; hence we emerged into the centre of the ruins, with the famous Six Columns and the Temple of Jupiter in front.

So gracefully are these great buildings proportioned, that the mind fails at first to appreciate their enormous size. It is only when standing beneath the pillars, the bases of which, alone, are higher than a man's stature, that one can believe the columns to be seventy-five feet high. Even the rich tracery of the roofs and cornices, is scarcely more striking than the orange rusty colour which the stone has assumed in weathering. As at Jerusalem, this colour is most remarkable on the side from which the winter storms beat on the ruins.

The position of the Kŭl'ah, or "Castle," as the enclosure is called, is very low; but the plateau is supported on vaults some thirty feet high, the space enclosed being, roughly, 1000 feet east and west, by 400 north and south. On the east is a hexagonal structure, with a vestibule, to which a flight of magnificent steps originally led up, but was destroyed by the Saracens in converting the temple into a fortress.

The hexagon and the great court beyond, are surrounded with alcoves, most richly decorated, and once including statues, which now, no doubt, lie hidden beneath the rubbish. The domed roofs of the alcoves are all richly carved; in one, a

head surrounded with a web of scaly wings; in another, a winged dragon straggling over the whole roof. The shattered shafts of granite columns lie before the recesses, and mounds of rubbish cover the floor.

A Christian basilica once stood close to the Sun Temple; but its dimensions are dwarfed by the huge columns, which seem to bear witness to the grandeur of the genius of their Roman founder, dwarfing the puny attempts of Byzantine art and intellect. The church is all gone, except the foundations. The great pillars of the Sun Temple have fallen one by one; but six weather-beaten survivors still resist the fury of the winter and the constant eating away of the frost, though their bases have all been sapped, by the Turks, in seeking for the metal cores run into the joints. The pillars are seventy-five feet high, and seven and a half feet in diameter; the cornice has a weight of nearly four tons to the square foot. As the capitals of some pillars are worn away, and the bases of all six are undermined, they cannot be expected long to remain standing, and any winter may bring the destruction of the most eastern column, and perhaps of the next two.

The method of erection of these huge masses of masonry remains a mystery. The Egyptian obelisks were monolithic, and could be swung into a vertical position; but the building up of the three great stones in a shaft, the placing of its

capital, and the crowning labour of raising the cornice blocks into position, seem to require superhuman power, and the simple explanation of the Arabs, that the sons of the Jann were employed to pile the huge masses, seems almost a tempting theory.

The most beautiful and perfect building is the smaller Temple of Jupiter, to the south. It is 118 feet long east and west, by sixty-five feet broad, in the interior, with a porch twenty-six feet wide, in front. The doorway, twenty-one feet broad, was spanned by a lintel in three pieces. The central block, or key-stone, weighing sixty tons, has slipped down, and is supported on a wall built by the Turks. Five attached columns, with fluted shafts, are built against each wall inside, and a rich cornice runs above them, whilst two rows of brackets, with canopies over them, once held statues between the pillars. The carving of the canopies is marvellously bold and intricate; every detail is sharply cut; the rosettes and graceful arabesques stand out almost separated from the stone. The wall across the temple, dividing off the altar part, is covered with graceful undulating figures, unfortunately headless; beneath are great vaults, covered with hard cement.

The door, forty-two feet high in the clear, has huge jambs in three courses, inside each of which a little staircase is hollowed out, ascending to the roof. The cornice above the door is per-

haps the richest design of all; and, on the soffit, or under side, a huge spread eagle is flanked by winged genii and wreaths. A correct drawing of one niche in Baalbek would take a day to do, and there are at least two hundred such niches.

The temple of Jupiter is surrounded by a cloister, comparatively narrow—eight feet ten inches in the clear—its columns fifty-eight feet high. The low-arched roof above is covered with colossal busts in high relief, set in frames of rich design. The effect of height, obtained by the very great disproportion in width, is more striking than even that of the loftier Six Columns.

Nine pillars remain on the north side of the cloister, and the roof, with its sculptured kings, queens, and warriors holding palm branches, is intact; but the rich cornice is dropping piecemeal from above. On the south only three pillars remain standing, and one great shaft leans against the walls, its three stones still adhering firmly together.

The greatest marvel of Baalbek has, however, still to be noticed. The western fortress-wall is intact, and consists of drafted stones fifteen to twenty feet long; the third course from the ground is composed, however, of three huge blocks, each more than sixty-three feet long. In the quarry lies a fourth, sixty-eight feet long, thirteen feet eight inches broad, fourteen feet high, along which three horsemen might ride

abreast; it is called the "pregnant stone," from a legend which is also found connected with the great column of the Huldah gate in the Temple.

Such are the main features of this mightiest temple ever built by Roman genius. In size Baalbek dwarfs Palmyra, and equals it in richness of workmanship. No doubt the superabundance of ornamentation is a mark of decadence in art; but the magnificence of the proportions seems to allow of any amount of tracery, without injury to the effect as a whole.

The sun was getting low as I sat sketching the Six Columns, which stood out dark and desolate against the glowing sky. A stork stood on one leg on the cornice; his mate was in a nest below. As I turned eastward, the scene was yet grander. The Temple of Jupiter was in dark shadow, with a foreground of tumbled columns, like fallen giants, sprawling over crushed blocks and ruined cornices. The wall on which I sat was battered in by the thud of one huge shaft tossed against it. Beyond the temple, the rich tracery of the Moslem *mihrab* on the south wall was visible; and, behind this again, was the dark foliage of mulberries, poplars, and willows, and the bare grey hills tipped with crimson from the setting sun.

It was indeed an impressive scene; the majesty of the Pagan, the pride of the Moslem, superhuman power and inexhaustible fancy—all alike things of the past; and beyond the puny works

of man, the "everlasting hills," with the rose of evening on their summits, unchanged as they stood long before the golden plates of the great temple had first caught the dying beams, and as they may still glow evening after evening, long after the huge columns have crumbled to dust. The stork stood on one leg, and no doubt considered the matter; the stars came out one by one, and unbroken stillness prevailed throughout the ruins.

On the 21st we rode back to Bludan, and on Monday, the 8th of September, we again set out, this time in company with Mr. Kirby Green, on an expedition to the summit of Hermon.

The first day's ride was a long one. Pushing rapidly over the Zebdâny plain, we reached, in three hours, the French road, and, crossing it, ascended a long valley, bare and grey with cliffs and a few oak bushes. We passed the famous temple called Deir-el-Ashaiyeh, described by Captain Warren, and then lost our way; but were at length directed by a charcoal-burner—one of the very few natives whom we met—to the little village of Rukhleh, on the steep barren slopes of Hermon. Here we were joined by Mr. Wright and Sergeant Armstrong, from Damascus. We visited the ruins and copied several inscriptions.

There are at Rukhleh two temples, one called "the King's Castle;" there is also a tower on a rocky knoll, and a Christian church built of the

fragments of the temples. In the church wall is part of a lintel representing an eagle, and a fine block with a head in bold relief, surrounded by a circle ornamented with honeysuckle pattern; the head is nearly five feet high.

In the afternoon we continued our ride along a rugged mountain path, passing by Kefr Kûk, where are beautiful vineyards, and a plain, which in winter becomes a lake, the water rushing out suddenly, with a roaring noise, from a cavern, and flooding the whole area.

Passing by Aiha, where are remains of another temple, we hurried on to the large town of Rashaiyeh, built about half-way up the side of Hermon, and presenting a striking appearance, in the moonlight, with long slopes of vineyard, terrace above terrace—a cataract of green trailing foliage. Our entry was triumphal. The Lieutenant-Governor, on a grey steed, pranced forth to receive the English Consul's party, at the head of an army of ten men, who formed line and presented arms. The cavalry—six irregulars in all—galloped somewhat wildly about, and one rider was kicked over his horse's head; we then got jammed in a narrow street, the horses fought, and the Kaimakam (or Governor) was nearly kicked, and retired hastily.

The summit of Hermon was only about three hours distant from Rashaiyeh; so we did not start till late next day. A reception was first

held in the little whitewashed room in which we slept. The Governor, the Kadi, the Druse Sheikh, the Greek pope, the Protestant schoolmaster, and their friends, all came together to do honour to the Consul. At the farther end of the room sat three old Druses, seemingly dyers—as their hands were blue with indigo—who expressed extreme approval of every remark that was made, and laughed loudly at the slightest symptom of a joke.

According to etiquette, the Governor's visit was returned in half an hour's time. The military again turned out, and lemonade was brought by a soldier, who held an embroidered cloth under our chins as we drank. The Governor was old and fat, with a cough; he was informed that I came to look at the stars from the top of Hermon, and supposed it was because they could be seen better at so great a height, being so much nearer.

We commenced the ascent of some 5000 feet about 10.30 a.m., passing first through the fine vineyards, into which the bears often come down, from the summit, to eat grapes; thence along lanes with stone walls, passing bushes of wild rose, of oak, and of hawthorn, and honeysuckle in flower. We thus reached the bottom of the main peak, consisting entirely of grey rocks, worn by snow and rain into jagged teeth and ridges, covered with a loose shingle or gravel. It seemed impossible for horses, and still more for laden

mules, to toil up; but the breeze grew fresher, and the bracing mountain air seemed to give vigour to man and beast. Resting at intervals, we gradually clambered up, passing by the little cave where the initiated Druses retire, for three or four months, and perform unknown rites. Ridge above ridge, of rock and grey gravel, appeared, each seemingly the last, each only hiding one above. Not an animal was to be seen, except an occasional vulture, and not a tree or shrub, for the snow covers all this part of the mountain till late in summer. By two o'clock I stood on the summit, and the rest soon followed.

A glorious panorama repaid us for our labour. South of us lay Palestine, visible as far as Carmel and Tabor, some eighty miles away; eastwards a broad plain, with detached hills on the dim horizon beyond; westwards the Lebanon and the golden sea; northwards, mountains as high as Hermon, Lebanon, and Anti-Lebanon.

As the sun sank lower, Palestine became more distinct, and appeared wonderfully narrow. The calm, green Sea of Galilee lay, dreamlike, in its circle of dark grey hills. Tabor was just visible to the south, and from it the plateau ran out east to the Horns of Hattin. The broken chain of the Upper Galilean Hills, 4000 feet high, lay beneath the eye, and terminated in the Ladder of Tyre. The mole of Tyre stood out black against the gleaming water; and the deep gorge of the

Litany could be seen winding past the beautiful fortress of Belfort. Dim and misty beyond, lay the ridge of Carmel, from the promontory to the peak of Sacrifice. The white domes in Tiberias were shining in the sun, and many of the Galilean towns, including Safed, could be distinguished.

The scene presented a great contrast on the east and west. In the brown, desolate, and boundless plain to the east, stood the distant green oasis of Damascus, and the white city, with its tall minarets. The flat horizon was broken only by the peaks of Jebel Kuleib, the "Hill of Bashan," some seventy miles away. South-east of Damascus was the terrible Lejja district, a basin of basalt seamed with deep gorges, like rough furrows, and with isolated cones, into which one appeared to look down, so distinctly were the shadows marked inside the hollow broken craters. No trees or water relieved the dusky colour; but the great dust whirlwinds were swirling slowly along over the plains, the bodies, as the Arabs tell us, of huge malignant spirits, carrying destruction in their path. At the foot of the mountain little villages were perched on the rocks, and a stream glittered in a green valley. In most of these hamlets there is a temple facing the rising sun, which appears first from behind the great plain on the east.

On the west, high mountain walls, ridge behind

ridge, reached out towards Beyrout, and, on the north, cedar clumps and ragged peaks, grey and dark with long sweeping shadows, were thrown in strong contrast against the shining sea.

The sun began to set, a deep ruby flush came over all the scene, and warm purple shadows crept slowly on. The Sea of Galilee was lit up with a delicate greenish-yellow hue, between its dim walls of hill. The flush died out in a few minutes, and a pale, steel-coloured shade succeeded, although to us, at a height of 9150 feet, the sun was still visible, and the rocks around us still ruddy.

A long pyramidal shadow slid down to the eastern foot of Hermon, and crept across the great plain; Damascus was swallowed up by it, and finally the pointed end of the shadow stood out distinctly against the sky—a dusky cone of dull colour against the flush of the afterglow. It was the shadow of the mountain itself, stretching away for seventy miles across the plain—the most marvellous shadow perhaps to be seen anywhere.

The sun underwent strange changes of shape in the thick vapours—now almost square, now like a domed temple—until at length it slid into the sea, and went out like a blue spark.

Our tent was pitched in the hollow, and six beds crowded into it. Until one in the morning we continued to observe the stars, but the cold was very considerable, though no snow was left, and the only water we had was fetched from a spring

about a third of the way down, and tasted horribly of the goat-skin. In the morning I ran to the peak, and saw the sun emerge behind the distant plain, and the great conical shadow, stretching over the sea and against the western sky, becoming gradually more blunt, until it shrivelled up and was lost upon the hills beneath.

The top of Hermon consists of three rocky peaks; two, north and south, of equal height, the third, to the west, considerably lower. On the southern peak are the ruins called Kŭsr esh Shabîb—a rock-hewn hollow or trench, and a circular dwarf-wall, with a temple just below the peak on the south. On the plateau is a rudely-excavated cave, with a rock-cut pillar supporting the roof, and a flat space levelled above, probably once the floor of a building over the cave. Of all these objects of interest we made careful plans, as well as of the shape of the summit.

There is one remarkable natural peculiarity of Hermon still to be noticed—namely, the extreme rapidity of the formation of cloud on the summit. In a few minutes a thick cap forms over the top of the mountain, and as quickly disperses and entirely disappears.

In the accounts of our Lord's Transfiguration, we read that whilst staying at Cæsarea Philippi, He retired with His disciples to a "high mountain apart;" and there can be but little doubt that some part of Hermon, and very probably the sum-

mit, is intended. From the earliest period the mountain has been a sacred place; in later times it was covered with temples; to the present day it is a place of retreat for the Druses. This lofty solitary peak seems wonderfully appropriate for the scene of so important an event; and in this connection the cloud formation is most interesting, if we remember the cloud which suddenly overshadowed the Apostles and as suddenly cleared away, when they found "no man any more, save Jesus only, with themselves." (Mark ix. 8.)

CHAPTER IX.

SAMSON'S COUNTRY.

We descended from the summit of Hermon on the south-east, through Kul'at el Jindil, where Nimrod is said to lie buried, whence it arises that no dew ever falls in the village; thence, by the gorge of the Barada, we marched back in one day to Bludan.

On the 13th of September I again rode to Damascus, and paid a most interesting visit to Abd el Kader. On the 24th we struck our tents and marched out of our pleasant mountain-camp, bound for Jerusalem and the hills of Judah. I was sorry to leave my kind hosts, but anxious to be once more in the field. Nineteen pack-animals and eight horses now formed the travelling-party, and wound in a long procession down the hill. Next day we reached Beyrout, in the early afternoon, and after three days' rest, set out, on Monday, to march down the coast to Jaffa.

The animals had been so badly cared for, by the native servants, in the journey up the coast, that

I determined not again to trust them in their hands. We were also able to shoot and stuff specimens of the sea-birds on our way, an opportunity which did not recur.

Leaving Beyrout and its pine plantations, we struck the ancient coast road, which was once carefully paved with large blocks, and apparently made of concrete, above this foundation. We halted under the oleanders of the River Damûr, which is spanned by a fine Roman bridge, beside which is a modern one of iron. Six hours' riding brought us to Sidon, jutting out into the sea, with well-built houses, and ruins of the famous harbour, in which the water is now not over four feet deep.

A mule unfortunately fell lame, and thus, when the sun set, we found ourselves in the streets of the town, without any shelter for the night or anything to eat. The French convent refused to take us in, on the plea that the Superior was ill and could not be disturbed. In the streets we were greeted only with sour looks from the fanatical Moslems; but at length we found hospitable shelter in the house of a Maltese, who was the American Consular Agent; his brother, who represented England, was dead, but six others, representing France, Germany, Austria, etc., etc., all live in Sidon, and three flags floated over our host's house. It struck me that, in case of a war between France and Denmark, a dignitary who,

in his own person, represented both nations, as did one of these brothers, must find himself unable to be on speaking terms with himself in his second capacity.

On the 30th of September we left at eight a.m., and rode to Tyre, about twenty-four miles. It was a very hot day, and the dull shore and shapeless hills were alike uninteresting. Tyre is a long, flat town, running out into the peninsula, once an island, and is crowned by a minaret. It is less picturesque in appearance than Sidon, which is surrounded with beautiful gardens, in which the banana is grown. A fine esplanade on the south-west, by the southern harbour of Tyre, formed a good camping-ground, and in the basin, now choked with fallen pillars and blocks of masonry, we were able to bathe luxuriously. The port on the north is less striking than that at Sidon, where the tower, on the entrance reef, beside the sea-gate which was once closed nightly by a chain, is remarkable for the great size of its masonry.

The third day's march was a long one; for as no accommodation could be found at Acre, we determined to push on as far as Haifa, which is forty miles by road from Tyre—a distance accomplished by the horses in nine and a half hours' riding, and by the mules in fourteen hours. Our route lay first round the shallow Bay of Tyre, and the sand was covered in the early morning by

innumerable crabs, which scampered towards the sea as we approached, or hid behind the little sand hillocks.

It was a bright morning, and fresher than the day before. We ascended the pass round the "White Headland," where the road is cut into rocky steps, on a gleaming chalky cliff covered with dark mastic bushes, with deep green water a hundred feet below, plashing against the rocks, and surging into the caverns. We then rode along a stony shore, leaving on our left the pillars of Alexandroschene; and hence we came to a fine gravel road, running over the promontory of Nakûra, the ancient Ladder of Tyre. Rounding this point, we saw, stretched before us, the whole extent of the Bay of Acre, and Haifa, beneath Carmel, twenty-two miles off.

We soon descended the promontory, and rested at the edge of the plain, under a fig-tree, in a palm-garden by a running stream; thence we passed by gardens, mud villages, a long line of cypresses, and a poplar hedge; by the beautiful country seat called El Bahjeh, and its shady pines; along a road hedged with prickly pear, and through fields of chaff. Yet Acre seemed a long way off, and the great aqueduct stretched, arch after arch, in endless line. At last we came to the shore near the Belus, but had still two hours' riding round the bay. The horses were hot and tired, and the soft sand was wearisome; but at length

we reached the Kishon ford, and soon after the comfortable hotel of Herr Kraft, in the German colony, where we were among old friends.

It was desirable, after so long a march, to give the beasts some rest; so on the next day we went only twelve miles, as far as our old camping-ground at Jeb'a, where I shot and stuffed one of the "boomehs," or small owls.

The fifth day was the hardest ride of the journey—ten and a half hours for a distance of 44 miles, after four days' riding, with a previous total of 100 miles. It spoke well for the pluck and condition of our horses, that not one suffered by the journey, and that all were afterwards fit for work within a few days' time. The day was cool, and fleecy clouds covered the sky; thus, with one hour's rest, we arrived at Jaffa by 6.30 in the evening.

It was a matter of congratulation to remember that the desolate desert of Sharon, through which we now travelled, was already thoroughly explored. Neither tree nor drinkable water did we find for many miles; sand, coarse grass, thistles, and marshy tracts covered with rushes, succeeded one another.

Our midday halt was made on the brink of a marshy river; and here we saw, stalking in the plain, a long string of the Nefei'at, or "club-bearing" Arabs, the scoundrels who had attacked Sergeant Armstrong in the spring. They now emerged from the marsh just as we mounted our

horses, and as they were fully armed and unaccompanied by women, we suspected their intentions; but they showed the usual Bedawîn caution in not attacking well-armed men who were ready prepared for them. We arrived, at length, at the dry bed of the "Roche Taillé" River, and found it full of luxuriant papyrus. At four p.m. we came in sight of the dark hump on which Jaffa stands; and, soon after, passing by the ruins of 'Arsûf, we forded the 'Aujeh, which, even so late as the 1st of October, was up to the girths, and, from its banks, a sharp canter brought us to the hotel, where I found my other two men comfortably installed, for Sergeant Armstrong only accompanied me, while Sergeant Black and Corporal Brophy went by sea with heavy stores.

Thus, in a continuous march of five days, with pack-animals, we had come 144 miles—a distance equal to the total length of Palestine—and not one of our beasts was laid up, or refused its feed in the evening. Although I have, subsequently, ridden farther at a stretch than the distance we rode on any one day in this march, we never undertook another journey so trying to our animals.

Arriving at Jaffa on Friday, we rested until Monday, and then rode up to Jerusalem, where we remained until Friday, the 10th of October, and thence marched out, to re-commence the Survey from a camp at Beit 'Atâb, a village in the hills some twelve miles south-west of Jerusalem.

The new district is one of considerable interest from a Biblical point of view. It is called the 'Arkûb, or "ridge," and consists of a long spur, about 2000 feet above the sea, with numerous smaller ridges branching off, and two important valleys to the north and south—the first the Valley of Sorek, the second that of Elah. Our camp was a place of considerable interest, if I am correct in identifying it with the Rock Etam, *in* which Samson took refuge from the Philistines. West of us were Sorek, Zoreah, Eshtaol, and Bethshemesh; and east of us Bether, the scene of the great destruction of the partisans of Barcocheba, and Beth Zacharias, the theatre of the battle in which Eleasar, the Hasmonean, perished under the elephant. These various sites are worthy of special notice as places of general interest.

Three places called Etam are noticed in the Old Testament. One a town of the south country (1 Chron. iv. 32), probably the place which we discovered in 1874, called 'Aitûn; the second, a city fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 6), near Bethlehem and Tekoa, and which has probably left its name in the spring called 'Ain 'Atân, near the so-called Solomon's Pools. The third Etam does not seem to have been a town at all, but "a strong rock," as Josephus calls it, in the territory of Judah, and is to be sought in that part of the country to which most of Samson's exploits are confined. (Judg. xv. 8.)

About two miles west of Beit 'Atâb, a valley, running north and south, separates the high rugged mountains of the 'Arkûb from the low rolling hills of the Shephelah district, beyond which is the Philistine plain. This valley joins the great gorge which bounded 'Judah on the north, and forms a broad vale, half a mile across, filled with luxuriant corn, with a pebbly torrent-bed in the middle, and low white hills on either side. The vale is called Wâdy Sŭrâr (a Hebrew word, meaning "pebbles"), and is the ancient Valley of Sorek. The ruins of Bethshemesh lie on a knoll surrounded by olive-groves, near the junction of the two valleys above mentioned. On the south is Timnah, where Samson slew the lion; and on the north are the little mud villages, Sŭr'a and Eshû'a—the ancient Zoreah and Eshtaol—the hero's home. The scene, looking up the great corn valley to the high and rugged hills above, is extremely picturesque, and is that which was spread before the eyes of the five lords of the Philistines, as they followed the lowing oxen, which bore the ark on the "straight way" from Ekron to Bethshemesh.

Here also, at the edge of the mountains, is the village of Deir Abân, supposed, by the early Christians, to mark the site of Ebenezer, the boundary of Samuel's pursuit of the Philistines, and of the land held by the Jews at that period. On the north brink of the Vale of Sorek (in which also Delilah lived) there is a conspicuous

white chapel on the hill, dedicated to Neby Samit, and close to the village of Zoreah. Confused traditions—which are, however, probably of Christian origin—connect this prophet with Samson, whose name is recognisable in other parts of this district under the forms Shemshûn, Sanasîn, and 'Aly (as at Gaza), and also a little farther south as Shemsîn and Samat. It appears probable that the tomb now shown at Zoreah, is that known, to the Jews, in the fourteenth century as Samson's; and the tradition, thus traced to other than monkish origin, is very possibly as genuine as that which fixes the tombs of Joseph and Phinehas near Shechem. Here, then, we are in Samson's country, and close to Zoreah we should naturally look for the Rock Etam.

The substitution of B for M is so common (as in Tibneh for Timnah), that the name "'Atâb" may very properly represent the Hebrew Etam (or "eagle's nest"); and there are other indications of the identity of the site. It is pre-eminently a "rock"—a knoll of hard limestone, without a handful of arable soil, standing, above deep ravines, by three small springs. The place is also one which has long been a hiding-place, and the requirements of the Bible story are met in a remarkable way; for the word rendered "top of the Rock Etam" is in reality "cleft" or "chasm;" and such a chasm exists here—a long, narrow cavern, such as Samson might well have "gone

down" into, and which bears the suggestive name Hasûta, meaning "refuge" in Hebrew, but having in modern Arabic no signification at all.

This remarkable "cave of refuge" is two hundred and fifty feet long, eighteen feet wide, and five to eight feet high; its south-west end is under the centre of the modern village; its north-east extremity, where is a rock shaft, ten feet deep, leading down from the surface of the hill, is within sixty yards of the principal spring.

The identification thus proposed for the Rock Etam is, I believe, quite a new one; and it cannot, I think, fail to be considered satisfactory, if we consider the modern name, the position, and the existence of this remarkable chasm. Ramath Lehi, where the Philistines assembled when searching for Samson (Judg. xv. 9—10), is naturally to be sought in the vicinity of Zoreah—Samson's home, and of the Rock Etam where he took refuge.

A little way north-west of Zoreah, seven miles from Beit 'Atâb, is a low hill, on the slope of which are springs called 'Ayûn Abu Mehârib, or the "fountains of the place of battles." Close by is a little Moslem chapel, dedicated to Sheikh Nedhîr, or "the Nazarite chief;" and, higher up, a ruin with the extraordinary title Ism Allah—"the name of God." The Nazarite chief is probably Samson, whose memory is so well preserved in this small district, and the place is perhaps

connected with a tradition of one of his exploits. The Ism Allah is possibly a corruption of Esm'a Allah—"God heard"—in which case the incident intended will be the battle of Ramath Lehi. Finally, we were informed by a native of the place that the springs were sometimes called 'Ayûn Kâra, in which name we should recognise easily the En Hak-Kore, or "fountain of the crier." (Judg. xv. 19.)

To say that this spot certainly represents Ramath Lehi—"the hill of the jaw-bone"—would be too bold. It seems, however, clear, that a tradition of one of Samson's exploits lingers here; the position is appropriate for the scene of the slaughter with the jaw-bone, and we have not succeeded in finding any other likely site.

Next in interest to the scenery of Samson's life comes the site of Bether, the scene of the final overthrow of the Jewish power in Palestine by the Romans.

Bar Choseba, the Jewish leader, possibly took his name from the town Choseba, which is perhaps the modern Kueizîba. Claiming to be the long-expected King-Messiah, he assumed the title Bar Cocheba—"Son of the Star"—and it is remarkable that near Kueizîba, not far south-east of Bether, is the sacred tomb of Abu Nujeim, which in the vulgar dialect means "Son of the Star." His last retreat was Bether, a strong fortress, near Jerusalem, and forty Jewish miles from

the sea. For three years and a half the fanatical party here held out, and are said to have been finally betrayed by a Samaritan.

Dion Cassius relates that 580,000 Jews were massacred when the fortress fell. Rabbi Akiba, the friend and banner-bearer of Bar Choseba, was flayed alive, repeating with his last breath the noble words of the Shema, or morning prayer of the Temple: "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord." (Deut. vi. 4.) The valley below Bether is said, in the Talmud, to have run blood to the sea, and the Romans lost a great number of troops in the siege. The power of the Jews was broken for ever by a destruction which must have decimated the nation, and the seat of the Sanhedrim was withdrawn finally to Galilee, having been situated at Jamnia up to this date since the time of the destruction of Jerusalem.

The only site which seems really suited for the important fortress of Bether is the village Bittîr, on the south side of the valley of the same name, thirty-five English miles from the sea, and about five from Jerusalem. On every side, except the south, it is surrounded by deep and rugged gorges, and it is supplied with fresh water from a spring above the village. On the north the position would have been impregnable, as steep cliffs rise from the bottom of the ravine, upon which the houses are perched. The name exactly represents the Hebrew, and the distances agree with those

noticed by Eusebius and in the Talmud. Nor must the curious title be forgotten, which is applied to a shapeless mass of ruin on the hill, immediately west of Bittîr, for the name, Khŭrbet el Yehûd—"ruin of the Jews"—may be well thought to hand down traditionally among the natives of the neighbourhood the memory of the great catastrophe of Bether.

The lofty but narrow ridge of the watershed which runs out south from Bittîr is the scene of another great tragedy in Jewish history. It is a bare and rocky hill, the summit of which, 3260 feet above the sea, is called Râs Sherifeh, and it extends to a lower saddle, upon which stand the ruins of Beit Skâria, the ancient Beth Zachariah. The ridge commands a fine view both east and west, being the very backbone of Judea. On the one side are the bare white hills round Bethlehem, and the fantastic peaks of the Judean Desert, with the great wall of the Moab mountains far beyond; on the other, the long spurs of the 'Arkûb, resembling waves, with gleams of white chalk, like the surf, on their sides.

From a military point of view, the position is a fine one. The great western road from the plain ran beneath the hill-top, gradually ascending, and was joined by a second main Roman highway from the south-west; while the Hebron road was also commanded on the other side. The very steep slopes on the east, and the precipices and

deep valleys on the west, rendered the position impregnable on its flanks, and in rear the retreat to Jerusalem was easy, while abundant water was obtainable from neighbouring springs.

Such was the position in which Judas Maccabeus, with true military instinct, awaited the attack of Antiochus, emerging from the difficult defiles between Bethzur, and Beth Zacharias, into the more open ground near the so-called Solomon's Pools. The Jews were apparently not expert horsemen at this period of their history, any more than at the present day; and the superiority of the Greeks in cavalry and in elephants must have been almost neutralised by the character of the ground. Few scenes have been more vividly described in history than the impetuous advance of the Greek army, the shining of their brazen helmets, and the ponderous wooden towers upon their elephants, the devotion of Eleazar, and the timely retreat of Judas.

The ridge of Beth Zacharias was also the scene of a triumph over the native peasantry, which we owed to the kind offices of our friend Mr. Moore. I had erected a small cairn on the hill-top, which was pulled down by unknown hands, and I accordingly sent a complaint to the Consulate. On the 24th of October, I met M. Selamy, the Consul's secretary, at the spot; and on arriving I found, to my astonishment, a crowd of peasants busily engaged in constructing a huge pile, fifteen

feet high. The inhabitants of the surrounding villages of Hausân, el Khŭdr and Nehhâlîn had all been pressed into the service. Soldiers had been sent to each place by the Governor of Jerusalem at Mr. Moore's request; the men were not allowed to go to plough, nor the goat-herds to take out their flocks, until the work was done. The huge conical cairn was whitewashed all over; and there it probably still stands, under the protection of the Greek pope of El Khŭdr, a landmark visible for twenty miles round. The moral effect of this prompt action was immense, and the Survey party received no molestation from any natives within the district afterwards. To the energy and promptitude of the Consul we therefore owed a very material improvement in the facility with which we were able to carry out our work.



CONSTANTINE'S BASILICA AT BETHLEHEM.

CHAPTER X.

BETHLEHEM AND MAR SABA.

THE tradition which fixes the grotto in the old basilica at Bethlehem, as the site of the stable where Christ was born, is the most venerable of its kind in existence, the place being noticed by Justin Martyr in the second century. It is almost the only site which we can trace earlier than the time of Constantine, and the tradition seems to me credible, because, throughout this part of Palestine, there are innumerable instances of stables cut in rock, resembling the Bethlehem

grotto. Such stables I have planned and measured at Tekoa, 'Azîz, and other places south of Bethlehem, and the mangers existing in them leave no doubt as to their use and character.

The credibility of this tradition thus appears to be far greater than that attaching to the later discoveries, by which the enthusiastic Helena, and the politic Constantine settled the scenes of other Christian events; and the rude grotto with its rocky manger may, it seems to me, be accepted even by the most sceptical of modern explorers.

Bethlehem is a long town of solidly-built stone houses, crowning the summit of two knolls, connected by a lower saddle, on a white chalk ridge, with steep declivities to the north and south. The monastery and basilica are at the east end of the town, overlooking the northern valley. The population of 5000 souls, is almost entirely Christian, and the inhabitants are remarkable for their enterprise and energy in trade. The contrast between Bethlehem and Hebron is very striking; it is the contrast between Christianity and Islam, between the vitality of the religion of progress and civilisation and the hopeless stagnation of a fatalistic creed. Hebron is a city of the past, wrapped in contemplation of its sacred tombs. Bethlehem is a thriving modern town—the birthplace of a faith that looks forward rather than back.

The Church of the Virgin now stands inside a fortress monastery, in which Latin, Greek, and

Armenian monks find a common retreat. The basilica was erected, according to cotemporary evidence, by order of Constantine, and is thus the oldest church in Palestine, and perhaps in the world. It has escaped destruction on every occasion when other churches in Palestine were overthrown, and the greater part of the work is stated, by competent authority, to be of the original design. In the eleventh century, when the mad Caliph Hakim destroyed the Holy Sepulchre churches, the Bethlehem basilica was spared; in 1099 the Crusaders sent a detachment of troops to protect it, and it thus again escaped, nor was it destroyed in the thirteenth century, although threatened by the Moslems. In this basilica, therefore, we have the only undisputed erection of the time of Constantine in Palestine, and its value cannot be overrated.

Architectural authorities are of opinion that our information as to the progress of Byzantine art in the East is still very imperfect. M. de Vogüé has done much to elucidate the subject, in his work on the great buildings of northern Syria, many of which are dated with exactitude. In Palestine we have two valuable examples, one of fourth century, and one of sixth century architecture—the basilica at Bethlehem, and Justinian's fortress on Gerizim, with which we may compare ruins of unknown date; and in the first we find M. de Vogüé's opinion confirmed, with respect

to the slowness with which Byzantine art developed in style in the East, in comparison with the more rapid progress of the western Romanesque.

The basilica is moreover interesting because its general plan resembles, very closely, the description given by Eusebius of Constantine's buildings over the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. On the west was an atrium or outer court, parts of the outer walls of which and shafts of its columns still remain. A narrow vestibule or narthex, entered by a door scarcely four feet high, leads into the basilica itself, which consists of a nave and four aisles, with four rows of eleven columns each, a total breadth of about thirty yards, and a length about equal.

The aisles have flat roofs, above the pillars which are nineteen feet high, but the nave has a clerestory, with walls some thirty feet high above the capitals, and a pointed roof. A wall has been built across the east end of the basilica, separating off the chancel, which has three apses, north, south, and east, and which forms the Greek church. Beneath the chancel is the Grotto of the Nativity. North of the basilica is the more modern Latin chapel of St. Catherine, from which a staircase leads down to vaults communicating with the Grotto.

The shafts are monoliths of red and white marble, painted with figures of saints, now dim with age, and scrawled over with the crests and

titles of knightly pilgrims of the Crusading ages. The capitals are of the Corinthian order, debased in style, with the cross carved on the rosettes of each. The wall above was once decorated all over with glass mosaic, fragments of which still remain, representing scenes in our Lord's life, portraits of angels and of Scripture characters, with arabesques and Greek inscriptions. These mosaics, with those on the chancel walls, were executed by order of the Greek Emperor, Manuel Comnenos, in the middle of the twelfth century. The roof above, once painted and gilded, was put up in 1482, the fine rafters having been given by Philip of Burgundy, the lead (stripped off later by the Moslems to make bullets) by Edward IV. of England; and the work was executed in Venice, and brought on camels from Jaffa. Further restorations were made in 1478, and again in 1672 and 1842, but the majority of the work appears to belong to the original structure of the time of Constantine.

On the 24th of October, 1873, we first approached Bethlehem from the west, passing by the great tanks near Urtâs, commonly called Solomon's Pools, but more probably of the same date with the aqueduct passing by them, which was constructed by Pontius Pilate.

The olive harvest had commenced, and picturesque groups were gathered in the groves, whilst little hammocks for the babies were slung between the trees. The Bethlehem women are famous for

their beauty, for their delicate complexions and aquiline features; they are distinguished by their head-dress, a tall felt hat, in shape a truncated cone, over which a white veil is arranged, and from which heavy strings of coins are suspended. Their dresses are also remarkable from the square patches of red and yellow, which are introduced into the blue or striped fabric of which they are composed.

Bethlehem is supplied with water by cisterns, and from the great aqueduct which passes through the hill. The famous well for the waters of which David thirsted, is supposed to be represented by an ancient and extensive cistern with many mouths, on the north-west. It is not impossible that this may be the "pit," as Josephus calls it, which was beside the gate of the city.

Two feasts are yearly held at Bethlehem, on the Greek and Latin Christmas Eve. The scene on the latter occasion is especially interesting, and may here be described, though I did not witness it until the Christmas of 1874, in company with Lieutenant Kitchener.

Arriving at Bethlehem on that occasion, we visited the church, and descended into the sacred grotto. The floor of the chancel is raised, but the transepts are on the same level with the basilica, and from them two staircases lead down to the grotto, which is about twelve yards long, and three or four wide. It was profusely de-

corated, and the passages were hung with cloth of gold. The exact place of the Saviour's birth is shown near the east, in a recess beneath an altar. The manger is on the south; both are cased in marble, but two old columns, supporting the roof, appear to be of rock. The western passage, to the Latin chapel, was decorated with paper hangings, with paintings of scenes in our Lord's life, and, over the hangings, were some pictures so old that the tarnished gold backgrounds were covered with prismatic tints.

The Latin chapel is a long vaulted room on the north of the basilica, once painted in fresco, but now whitewashed. It was hung with red silk. On the east is a large altar, with a screen and huge wax torches; behind it is the choir. The chapel is principally remarkable for its fine silver lamps.

Mass was being performed, and the music and singing were impressive, in a land where song seems almost unknown. The Latin Patriarch, in cloth of silver, with a mitre of gold and jewels, and a handsome silver crook, sat on his throne to the north. He was an Italian, a man of dignified mien and delicate features, but apparently of very weak health. After the service he was disrobed, and again robed in purple, with a beautiful ermine cape, the dress of a Canon of the church. In this attire, after a few prayers at a side altar, he was conducted out in procession.

We now wandered through the vaults, where the tombs of Eusebius, of Paula, and of her daughter Eustochia, are shown, and the famous study—a gloomy, rock-cut cell—where St. Jerome spent so many years of his life, engaged on the noble Vulgate translation of the Scriptures.

We left the building in order to witness the entry of the French Consul, who attends the ceremony on this day as representative of the "Eldest son of the Church." First came the village elders in gay dresses, capering madly on horses and mules; then about a couple of dozen cavalry-soldiers in black, with red fezzes and facings. Then four *kawasses* on good brown horses, dressed in crimson hussar jackets, braided with gold and black, with blue trousers and silk head-shawls, and carrying huge maces with gilded tops. The Consul and his secretary came last.

At ten in the evening the bell began to ring, and we again entered the Latin chapel. The place was quite full, and the congregation pushed and struggled, and chattered at the top of their voices. The French Consul appeared in full uniform, covered with orders, and we also obtained good places near the altar. The heat was fearful, and many persons fainted and had to be dragged out.

The long wearisome service, almost entirely choral, with occasional solos, went on for two hours. The Patriarch, in his hot and heavy vest-

ments of cloth-of-gold, looked much exhausted. His mitre was changed at various times, one being of silver, a second of gold, a third jewelled. The whole service was directed by an extremely active priest, who appeared to be a sort of master of the ceremonies.

At midnight the climax was reached, the storm of song and music suddenly ceased, and, in the stillness, the clock struck, and the seventh candle on the high altar was lighted. A curtain was drawn back, and above the altar, was a little glass-fronted ebony box, from which the rosy face of a small wax image looked down representing an infant swathed in cloth-of-gold. The great convent-bell swung with a deep sound, heralding the news of Christmas morn, and the little red-cassocked choristers burst forth, in memory of the angels, with the "Gloria! gloria in excelsis!" The organ struggled and pealed in a mad and powerful symphony, and was accompanied by a pipe or reed, in memory of the music of the shepherds' pipes. The mystic ceremonies of the early mass were commenced, and the weary congregation became interested.

There was something at once touching and ridiculous in this curious scene: ridiculous when one considered the rude and inadequate symbolism employed, and on the other hand impressive, when one reflected that for fifteen centuries the Christmas morn had yearly been celebrated within these

walls, and the riches of the Church, the genius of great composers, the intellect of a powerful priesthood, all combined to pay honour to the birthday of the little Jewish child, who had been born in the rude rock stable one wintry night, in a small village of a remote and despised province of the empire of Rome.

Two more hours of singing and music followed, and the great procession to the grotto was then formed. Huge wax torches were given to the Consul and his secretary, and candles to the rest of the congregation. A second wax image, in a little wicker cradle, was placed on the altar beneath the former, and borne thence by the Patriarch, who came last. As he passed me, I saw that the figure was surrounded with long strips of paper, like swaddling-clothes loosed from its limbs, one of its hands being raised in benediction.

Very striking was the scene in passing through the Greek chancel. The dark building was lighted only by the torches and tapers, which made the silver lamps above shine out against the dusky background. A dense crowd was kept in its ranks by two lines of Turkish soldiers with loaded Snider rifles. The variety of costumes and faces was wonderful, while the dark columns and grim figures in the glass mosaics, the forest of rafters in the ancient roof, and the rich screen before the apse, formed a dim and effective background, to

the glittering line of priests and acolytes in cloth of silver and gold.

The thought could not but suggest itself, how different was the scene thus enacted, amidst the awe-stricken veneration of the multitude, with all the pomp and magnificence which could be lavished on it by a rich and long-established Church, from that first Christmas scene in the dark damp stable beneath, the events of which day were now symbolised by the dressing and undressing of a small wax doll.

The grotto was filled with priests, and blazed with crimson silk, silver and gold, lit up by rows of silver lamps above. The Gospel for the day was read in Latin, and at the words "Et peperit filium suum primogenitum," the image was laid by the Patriarch on the marble slab, supposed to mark the spot where Christ was born.

"And wrapped Him in swaddling clothes."

The paper bands were wound round the limbs of the image.

"And laid Him in a manger."

The priest descended to the recess with little rock columns, and laid the cradle on one of the two altars within. The Gospel was continued from the words "And there were shepherds abiding in the fields," until the Gloria in Excelsis had again been sung, and the Patriarch, after censing the image where it lay, returned with

equal state to the Latin chapel, where the mass was resumed.

The crowd was now so thick that we could scarcely move without treading on some one. On the right were the women in gay-coloured dresses with white veils, the married ones wearing the Bethlehem cap. On the left were the men, who had removed their turbans but still retained their cotton skull-caps. At five in the morning, after seven hours of heat and discomfort, we left the Patriarch still engaged in his arduous office.

East of Bethlehem is a narrow plain or open valley, bare and treeless, with white stony slopes and a few crumbling ruins. One of these ruins is a large building called Sîr el Ghanem, "the sheep-fold," apparently an ancient monastery; a second site is called "the Church of the Flocks," a subterranean Greek chapel, with mediæval ruins above, first mentioned in Crusading chronicles. It is here that Migdal Eder, "the Tower of the Flock," is supposed to have stood, where, according to the Jews, Messiah was first to appear; and it is on this plain, according to tradition, that the angelic messenger appeared to the shepherds, and that the Gloria in Excelsis was first sung.

On the 5th of November we marched across the Shepherds' Plain and entered the terrible wilderness which stretches above the Dead Sea on the west, and creeps up almost to the vines and olive-groves of Bethlehem.

Two remarkable places may be noticed south-east of Bethlehem at the entrance of this desert; namely, Herodium and the Cave of Khureitûn. The first is a great conical mound on the north side of the valley which runs down from the so-called Solomon's Pools to the Dead Sea. In the scenery south of Jerusalem, and in views of the country round Bethlehem, this mountain forms a most remarkable feature. It is commonly called, by Christians, "the Frank Mountain," from a fifteenth-century tradition that it was defended by Franks, for a long time, against the Saracens, after the loss of Jerusalem. By natives it is called Jebel Fureidîs, "Hill of the little Paradise," possibly a corruption of its old name, Herodium. It was here that Herod the Great built his summer palace, and also his tomb. There is a large reservoir on the flat ground at the foot of the cone, with a central fountain once fed by an aqueduct from the spring at Etam, and near it are buildings which resemble, very closely, those attributable to Herod at Masada. The cone rises 400 feet above this platform. It is truncated, and surrounded by a circular wall, on which are four round towers. On arriving at the summit one looks down into a sort of crater 290 feet in diameter, full of debris. The view from the top is a fine one, with a long succession of barren hills, and the blue waters of the Dead Sea, and the precipices of Moab beyond. The architecture is

of great interest as the most perfect specimen of this early date in Palestine.

The Cave at Khureitûn is the most remarkable cavern in the country. The entrance is reached by creeping along a very narrow ledge, on the side of a high precipice of hard limestone, in a magnificent desert gorge. The entrance is double, and is protected by a great block of stone. The narrow passage leads to a great circular hall cut in rock, and, from this, other narrow winding passages run yet farther into the heart of the mountain; the windings are extremely intricate, leading from one chamber to another, the farthest being some 200 yards from the entrance. A whole day was spent in planning the place. For 100 feet I followed a long burrow, so narrow and low that I could only just drag myself along it, on my hands and knees, with a candle in one hand; huge bats flew into my face and more than once extinguished the light, but I succeeded in reaching the very end, and in searching out the extremity of every other passage in this extraordinary cavern.

It appears probable that the whole of the caves and passages are formed by water action; here and there, in the outermost chambers, the walls have been shaped with a pick, but the general character is not unlike other water-worn caverns in limestone country.

In the twelfth century the Crusaders fixed upon the Khureitûn Cave, with their usual hasty judg-

ment, as being the Cave of Adullam, no doubt because it was the most remarkable place of the kind that they could find. The early Christians, however, had been better informed, and the true site, as will be seen later, is to be sought in the Valley of Elah, many miles west of Bethlehem; for Josephus tells us that the cave was at the Royal City of Adullam, which was in the low hills west of the watershed mountains.

Our first camp in the desert was fixed beside the Monastery of St. Saba, a famous settlement of Greek monks. We here entered into an entirely distinct region. The character of the rock was different from the stratified limestone of the mountains above; it is a white soft chalk, which is worn, by the winter rain, into long knife-edged ridges, separated by narrow ravines with stony beds. The sea breeze never visits this ghastly desert, which is fitly called in Scripture Jeshimon, or "solitude." Thus, though in spring the naked slopes are thinly covered with grass and flowers, it presents, throughout nearly the whole year, a long succession of glaring ridges, with fantastic knolls and peaks, and sharp ragged spurs, absolutely treeless and waterless. The fauna also changes; the tawny desert-partridge takes the place of the red-legged Greek species, common in other districts. The ibex succeeds the gazelle, and many birds unknown in other parts of Palestine are here abundant. The people also are a distinct race;

their language is as different from that of the peasantry as is broad Scotch from Devonshire dialect; their habits, dress, dwellings and traditions are those of an entirely different people.

Everything in this desert is of one colour—a tawny yellow. The rocks, the partridges, the camels, the foxes, the ibex, are all of this shade, and only the dark Bedawîn and their black tents are distinguishable in the general glare.

The convent of Mar Saba stands on the south side of the huge fissure or gorge called the Valley of Fire, by which the water from Jerusalem comes down to the Dead Sea. East of it is a plateau between mountains on the west side and precipices rising eight hundred feet from the shores of the lake on the east. This plateau is also of water-worn marl with innumerable ridges, knolls, peaks, ravines, and iron crags around it.

It was from a "Tubg" or terrace, east of the plateau, that we first looked down on that marvellous sea (1300 feet lower than the Mediterranean), which swallows up all Jordan and all the snows of Hermon, and yet has no outlet, but yearly gives off the surplus supply in the heavy steam of evaporating water, which in summer hides it in a hot haze.

The morning sun cast purple, dusky shadows, over the great mountains to the east, leaving patches of bright light on their level summits. The high piles of cumulus rose, in silvery brilliancy, above a

long grey base of stratus clouds. The sea itself lay unruffled by a single breath of wind, blue and glossy, shining like oil, with long bands of white scum here and there stretching across it. The foreground was yet more extraordinary—fawn-coloured marl with bands of dark brown flint, in a tumbled confusion of cones and knolls, without a single tree or shrub, but streaked, on the north, with a pinkish colour, and capped with harder limestone. Part of this district still bears, among the Bedawîn, the title 'Amrîyeh, which represents the Hebrew Amorah or Gomorrah. A few scattered ruins exist on the plateau, and the Arabs have a tradition that these are remains of vineyards, which once existed, according to them, throughout this scorched and desolate solitude.

The hills west of the plateau are well worthy of notice. They consist of hard brown limestone, and I discovered a feature of great geological interest, in a fault which runs north and south, at the point where the white marl commences; showing that a violent, and probably sudden subsidence has here taken place, at a period so late (geologically speaking), as to be subsequent to the chalk era. The general bearing of this observation on the history of the lake, will be noticed in a subsequent chapter.

Day after day I wandered in this desert, followed only by a single Bedawi. It was Ramadan,

and my old guide would touch neither food nor water till after sunset. We became great friends during our rambles, and one day while we rested at noon in a dark rock-hewn cavern, he unfolded to me an enticing proposition. He was willing, he said, to give me his daughter in marriage, and asked what sum I should be willing to pay as her dower. I was, however, obliged to explain that, in our country, the dower was always given by the bride's father, a piece of information which considerably damped his ardour; and he changed the subject before I was able to ask the amount at which he would feel inclined to value his daughter, if I should have been willing to accept her in accordance with the custom of my own country.

The heat was terrible. Not only was the actual temperature high, but not a blade of grass nor a breath of wind gave relief. In the evening I used to feel positively weakened by the effect of the sun, and sore from head to foot as though beaten with a rod. The caves were the only places where any shade could be found, and they were even hotter than the glaring desert. There are probably few places in Asia where the sun beats down with as fierce and irresistible a power as in the Desert of Judah.

The western mountains, above the plateau, form a long ridge running north and south, the highest point of which is called El Muntâr, the "watch-

tower," while the rest is named El Hadeidûn. A steep slope, unbroken save by precipices, comes sheer down from the top to the plateau, and the mountain is barren and fawn-coloured like the rest of the country. Now this hill, as I afterwards found out, is a place of historical interest, and the story is as follows :

According to the Law of Moses the Scapegoat was led to the wilderness and there set free. This was not, however, the practice of the later Jews. A scapegoat had once come back to Jerusalem, and the omen was thought so bad that the ordinary custom was modified, to prevent the recurrence of such a calamity. The man who led the goat arrived at a high mountain, called Sook, and there was at this place a rolling slope, down which he pushed the unhappy animal, which was shattered to atoms in the fall. It was always a matter of much interest to me to find out where this mountain was.

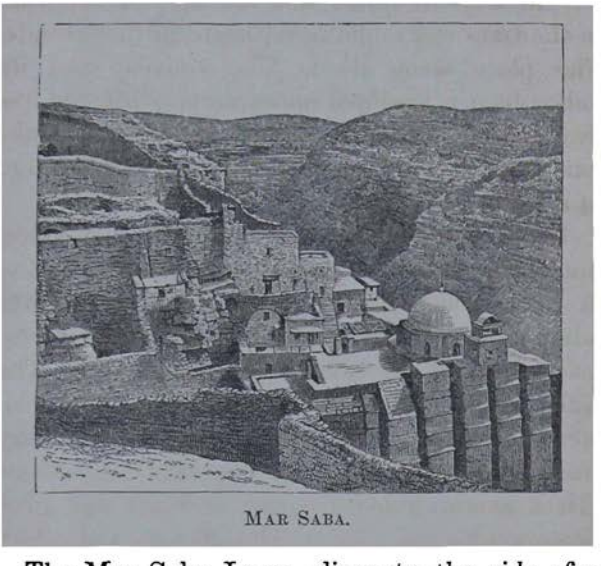
The Scapegoat was led out on the Sabbath, and in order to evade the law of the Sabbath-day's journey, a tabernacle was erected at every term of two thousand cubits, and became the domicile of the messenger, who, after eating bread and drinking water, was legally able to travel another stage. Ten such tabernacles were constructed between Sook and Jerusalem, and the distance was ninety *Ris*, or six and a half English miles. The district was called Hidoodim, and the high mountain Sook.

The first means "sharp," the second "narrow," both applying well to the knife-edged ridges of the desert. The distance of ninety *Rîs* brings us to the great hill of El Muntâr, and here, beside the ancient road from Jerusalem, is a well called Sûk, while in the name Hadeidûn, applied to part of the ridge, we recognise the Hebrew Hidoodim.

Here then, I think, we may fairly conclude is the Mountain of the Scapegoat. From this high ridge the unhappy victim was yearly rolled down into the narrow valley beneath, at the entrance of the great desert, which first unfolded itself before the eyes of the messenger as he gained the summit half a mile beyond the well of Sûk. Beside this well stood probably the tenth booth to which he returned after the deed, and where he sat until sun-down, when he was permitted to return to Jerusalem.

From a very early period this horrible wilderness appears to have had an attraction for ascetics, who sought a retreat from the busy world of their fellow men, and who thought to please God by torturing the bodies which He had given them. Thus the Essenes, the Jewish sect whose habits andtenets resembled so closely those of the first Christians, retired into this wilderness and lived in caves. Christian hermits, from the earliest period, were also numerous in all the country between Jerusalem and Jericho, and the rocks are riddled with caves in inaccessible places where

they lived. About 480 A.D., St. Saba and St. Euthymius followed the general custom, and established here, in the Fire Valley, the first nucleus of the present monastery.



MAR SABA.

The Mar Saba Laura clings to the side of a precipice some four hundred feet high, and is built against the cliff with huge flying buttresses to support the walls. The buildings are scarcely distinguishable in colour from the brown crags on which they stand. The huge crevice, which seems to have been rent in some great convulsion of nature, is bare and tawny like the rest of the country. The silence of the desert

surrounds it, and only the shrill note of the golden grackle, or the howl of a jackal, breaks this solemn stillness. Not a tree or shrub is in sight, walls of white chalk and sharp ridges shut out the western breeze, and the sigh of the wind in the trees is a sound never heard in the solitude. The place seems dead. The convent and its valley have a fossilised appearance. Scarcely less dead and fossil are its wretched inmates, monks exiled for crimes or heresy, and placed in charge of a few poor lunatics.

Ladies are not admitted into the monastery, but we were provided with a letter to the Superior. A little iron door in a high yellow wall gives admission from the west, thence a long staircase leads down into a court before the chapel. The walls within are covered with frescoes, some old, some belonging to the time when the monastery was rebuilt, in 1840, by the Russian Government; Greek saints, hideous figures in black and grey dresses, with stoles on which the cross, and ladder and spear, are painted in white, stand out from gilded backgrounds. Against these ghosts of their predecessors the monks were ranged, in wooden stalls, or *miserere* benches with high arms, which supported their weary figures under the armpits. The old men stood, or rather drooped in their places, with pale sad faces, which spoke of ignorance and of hopelessness, and sometimes of vice and brutality; for the Greek monk

is perhaps the most degraded representative of Christianity, and these were the worst of their kind. Robed in long sweeping gowns, with the cylindrical black felt cap on their heads, they looked more like dead bodies than living men, propped up against the quaint Byzantine background. One could fancy one's self suddenly brought back to the dark ages of the fifth and sixth centuries, when art, and literature, and even human intellect seem to have sunk into a second childhood, and that these were the very men who had fought so obstinately for and against the Monophysite heresy, which St. Saba succeeded in putting down.

The floor of the church was unoccupied, and paved with marble; the transept was closed by the great screen, blazing with gold, and covered with dragons and arabesques, and gaudy pictures of saints and angels on wood. A smell of incense filled the church, and the nasal drawl of the officiating priest soon drove us away to the outer air. We next visited the dark cave covered with pictures, which, after the Greek fashion, were cased in silver, and gleamed in the darkness, and where, behind a grating, are the skulls of the martyrs of a former massacre. Next we went up and down, by winding stairs in the rock, on to the roof of the church to see the *nawâkis*, or wooden beams, which are struck instead of bells, though bells are also hung in the belfry.

The convent pets came about us, the beautiful black birds with orange wings, which live only in the Jordan Valley. and have been named "Tristram's grackle," after that well-known explorer. They have a beautifully clear note, the only pleasant sound ever heard in the solitude, and the monks have tamed them, so that they flock round them to catch raisins, which they pounce upon in mid air. In the valley below the foxes and jackals also come for alms, the monks throwing down loaves for them.

There is a tall solitary palm, said to have been planted by St. Saba, and to have sprung up bearing dates without stones, which he ate the same day on which it was planted. There is also a cavern in the rock reached by a few steps, where he lived, and in the side of it, a little cupboard about three feet square, where his lion slept. The whole cave belonged to the lion, but the saint seems to have had little regard to the rights of property, and considerable obstinacy of character. Three times he was ejected by the beast, but each time he returned to his meditations undaunted, and the lion finally relinquished to the invader the greater part of his cave.

The monks scattered a little rosewater over our hands, and we left this gloomy abode of the dead-alive in the desert. Scarcely half the monks can read the valuable manuscripts in their library, yet they hide them carefully from the eyes of heretics.

Within the walls they may neither smoke nor eat meat, yet raw spirits find their way past the porter, as we were able to prove. A more hopeless, purposeless, degraded life can scarcely be imagined than that of such hermits.

Yet even for these poor outcasts in the stony wilderness, lifeless and treeless though it be, nature prepares every day a glorious picture, quickly-fading but matchless in brilliance of colour; the distant ranges seem stained with purple and pink; in autumn the great bands of cloud sweep over the mountains with long bars of gleaming light between, and for a few minutes, as the sun sets, the deep crimson blush comes over the rocks, and glorifies the whole landscape with an indescribable glow.



THE DOME OF THE ROCK.

CHAPTER XI.

JERUSALEM.

WE approach at length the centre of interest in Palestine—the Holy City. In this chapter are gathered up the results of fifteen visits to the capital, and of two winters, one passed in a country villa outside, and a second within the walls, in our "own hired house." During this time I penetrated into almost every nook and corner of the city, and visited its underground passages, and its smallest churches and mosques.

From my room in the Mediterranean Hotel I

looked out at dawn. The orange-coloured light behind the Mount of Olives showed a black outline of mosque and tree and hill, with steel-coloured mountains, to the right, capped by long wreaths of leaden vapour. The town lay in darkness below, its roofs shining wet with the heavy dew. Dimly visible the great dome of the Chapel of the Rock shone with its new coat of lead, and the tall minaret on the north wall of the Haram, together with the dark cypresses, was just distinguishable. A vapour went up over the whole city, and gave it a weird and dream-like aspect.

Soon the town awoke, and the morning hubbub began. Long trains of camels came in, and the swarthy Bedawîn wrangled with the soldiers at the gate. The market-girls from Bethlehem appeared under David's Tower, and, as the crowd thickened, black priests in saucepan-like hats jostled sickly Jews, with fur caps, long love-locks, and dirty gaberdines. The heavily-shod, unkempt Russian pilgrims mingled with sleek Rabbis, with Europeans, and German residents; Armenians with apple-cheeks and broad red sashes, and fierce Kurds, with long moustachios and swords, were also numerous.

So motley a scene as that which is presented daily in David Street and in the market-place under David's Tower, is perhaps to be found nowhere else. The chatter of the market people, the shouting of the camel-drivers, the tinkling of

bells, mingle with the long cry of the naked Santon, as he wanders, holding his tin pan for alms, and praising unceasingly "the Eternal God." The scene is most remarkable in the morning, before the glare of the sun, beating down on the stone city, has driven its inhabitants into the shadow; for, later on, the white houses, white chalk hills, and dull grey domes, present a truly unattractive prospect; but about eight a.m. the market still lies in cool shadow, under the huge ochre-coloured tower, with a background of cypresses, and of white walls belonging to the Bible Warehouse. The foreground is composed of a tawny group of camels lying down, donkeys bringing in vegetables or carrying out rubbish, and women in blue and red dresses slashed with yellow, their dark faces and long eyes (tinged with blue) shrouded in white veils, which are fringed perhaps with black or red. Soldiers in black, and Softas in spotless robes, are haggling about their change, or praying in public undisturbed by the din. Horsemen ride by in red boots with red saddles, and spears fifteen feet long. The Greek Patriarch walks past on a visit, preceded by his mace-bearers and attended by his secretary. Up the narrow street comes the hearse of a famous Moslem, followed by a long procession of women, in white "izars," which envelop the whole figure, swelling out like balloons, and leaving only the black mask of the face-veil visible; their voices

are raised in the high-pitched tremulous ululation which is alike their cry for the dead and their note of joy for the living. Next, perhaps, follows a regiment of sturdy infantry marching back to the castle, with a colonel on a prancing grey—men who have shown their mettle since then, and fat, unwieldy officers, who have perhaps broken down under the strain of campaigning. Their bugles blow a monotonous tune, to which the drums keep time, and the men tread, not in step, but in good cadence to the music. If it be Easter, the native crowd is mingled with the hosts of Armenian and Russian pilgrims, the first ruddy and stalwart, their women handsome and black-eyed, the men fierce and dark; the Russians, yet stronger in build and more barbarian in air, distinguished from every other nationality by their unkempt beards, their long locks, their huge fur caps and boots. Not less distinct are the Spanish, Mughrabee, Russian, and German Jews, each marked by a peculiar and characteristic physiognomy.

Jerusalem is a city of contrasts, and differs widely from Damascus, not merely because it is a stone town in mountains, whilst the latter is a mud city in a plain, but because, while in Damascus, Moslem religion and Oriental custom are unmixed with any foreign element, in Jerusalem every form of religion, every nationality of east and west, is represented at one time.

Jerusalem is quite a small town, the circum-

ference of its walls being only two miles and three quarters; yet within this space it contains a population of 20,000 souls. Ten sects or religions are established in it, and, if their various subdivisions are counted, they amount to a total of twenty-four, more than half of which are Christian. Prophets and visionaries of no particular sect are also not wanting at any time in the Holy City.

Jerusalem is a very ugly city. It is badly built of mean stone houses perched on the slope of the watershed, and seems in constant danger of sliding into the Kedron Valley. Beautiful bits of architecture are to be admired in its interior—the Gothic façade of the Holy Sepulchre, the grand walls of the Temple, the glowing interior of the mosque; the view towards the east is also very fine, a long wall of far-off mountains, with a foreground of embattled parapets and slender minarets standing out against the distance. Yet, with all this, the city as a whole is not beautiful; its flat-roofed houses and dirty lanes are neither pleasing nor healthy, and the surrounding chalk hills are barren and shapeless. Shechem is a fine and well-watered city. Damascus is bedded in gardens, and bristles with minarets, but there is nothing in the site or architecture of Jerusalem, as a whole, which can save it from the imputation of ugliness.

To the antiquary, nevertheless, Jerusalem is the most fascinating place in Palestine, and the longer one lives within its walls, the greater

becomes one's interest in the "Jerusalem question." The present town stands on mounds of rubbish which average thirty feet in depth, and reach in places one hundred feet above the rock. Nor is this a matter for astonishment when we remember how often the city has been razed to the ground. Within the memory of residents the level of the streets has risen ten inches, and huge mounds outside are daily growing higher.

Leaving the Jaffa Gate, with Dr. Chaplin, my first ramble was round the outside of the town. We descended by the "Sultan's Pool," which has been called Gihon from the fourteenth century downwards, in ignorance of the fact that the latter word means "springhead," and that the Sultan's Pool was constructed by the Germans in the twelfth century. Thence we rode down by the deep valley, on the south bank of which are the traditional Aceldama and the tombs of many Christian pilgrims from Europe to "Holy Zion." This valley leads down to Bîr Eyûb (Joab's Well); identified by Crusading error with the Biblical En-Rogel. The scene was here wonderful, the grey and rusty rocks shining red in the sun, the slopes of the upper city grey in shade. By the deep well the peasants were winnowing corn, and black goats and black donkeys were drinking. From thence we rode, in the very steps of Nehemiah, towards Siloam—a most disappointing pool with dry-stone walls and a little muddy water

below. We now caught a glimpse of the Haram wall, almost dwarfed by the great mound which hides two-thirds of its height, but glorious in its tawny hue, and in the stern broad contrast of light and shadow which is the most marked feature of Jerusalem scenery.

On our right the village of Siloam stood perched on the cliff of Zoheleth (Zahweileh), and surrounded by the hermitages of the twelfth-century anchorites cut tomb-like in the rock, while farther north was the "Peak of Pharaoh," as the peasants call the monument known to us as Absalom's Tomb.

Before us was the only true spring near Jerusalem, the "Mother of Steps," the Upper Gihon or "springhead," whence Hezekiah's aqueduct still leads down to Siloam or Gihon in the Valley. It has been suggested by Dr. Robinson that this is the true Bethesda. The early Christians pointed to the Twin Pools, and the Crusaders to the modern Birket Israel as representing Bethesda, but there are many indications that the eastern spring is the real place. Of these the most important is the fact that the Jerusalem Jews still consider the water of the 'Ain Umm ed Deraj, or Virgin's Pool as it is called by Christians, to have special virtue in healing disease. Every day crowds of both sexes go down to the spring, and, entering the dark archway, descend the steps, and await the fitful troubling of the waters, which rise suddenly and immerse them, fully clothed, nearly up

to the neck. This intermittent flow is supposed to be due to a natural syphon, but the native explanation is that a dragon lives below, and swallows the water when he is awake, but that, when he sleeps, it wells up freely.

May not we trace, I would ask, in this old custom of awaiting the overflow of the spring, a reminiscence of the time when the crowd of impotent folk lay by the Pool of Bethesda, "waiting for the moving of the water"? (John v. 3.)

Passing northwards from the spring, by the trim garden of Gethsemane, hidden by its ugly white walls, and ascending to the rock-founded corner tower of the city wall, we turned west, riding by the iron door of the great cavern, whence the Temple stones were hewn, and so returned through the Damascus Gate.

Going down David Street and through the fruit bazaar, with its background of arches, wooden balconies, marble portals brown with age, and fragments of Crusading architecture, you come at length through a bye-lane to the Jews' wailing-place—a narrow street with the high Temple rampart rising on the east. All along the narrow court the Jews are crowded on Friday. The scene is striking from the great size and strength of the mighty stones, which rise without door or window up to the domes and cypresses above, suggesting how utterly the original worshippers are cast out by men of alien race and faith as they here con-

gregate to bewail "our people that are wanderers, our priests that are defiled, our Temple that is cast down."

Nearest to us stood the Pharisees from Germany, the Ashkenazi Jews, dressed in their best; the old men with grey locks and thin grey beards, on their heads the high black velvet cap edged with wove fur, their lovelocks curling on either side of their lank faces, their robes long gaberdines of many colours; the younger men had blue-black hair, and pale strongly-marked features; here and there one saw a richly-dressed boy, a few little red-haired children, and occasionally an old woman, their faces all stamped with that subtle likeness which betrays the Jew in any country, and in any dress.

There were bits of colour in these groups which would have delighted Rembrandt. An aged white-haired man, in a mulberry gaberdine and black velvet cap, contrasted with the black satin and fur of his next neighbour, and in front of both was a third in a green dress. All these dark rich costumes were set in a warm background of tawny colour made by the great wall towering above.

Beyond the Ashkenazi were the Spanish and Mughrabee Jews, in quieter colours with black turbans, brown-eyed, and more dignified in bearing. Presently came in a hulking fellow in citron-coloured coat and blue trousers, with a

huge black pointed lambswool cap—a Russian Jew. The little Pharisees seemed to dwindle beside this giant, and his handsome, fresh-coloured face, blue eyes, and russet beard, seemed hardly to allow of his being one of the same nation; for it is the greatest peculiarity of the Jews that while never intermarrying, they yet approach in appearance most nearly the natives of the country in which they live, without entirely losing national traits of a distinctive character—a striking proof of the influence of climate and surroundings on race.

The emotion of a few of the worshippers was affecting. Here an aged woman in a white veil stood mute, her eyes fixed on the great stones of the Eternal House; there an elder leant his tearful face against the wall, his lips moving, his prayer-book unheeded. But as a rule the crowd maintained the tranquillity of an English congregation, and their dress and appearance was rather ludicrous than otherwise. The Rabbi read verse by verse the touching lamentation service, leaning his book on the wall, and lighted by two or three ordinary candle-lanterns placed before him. The assembly gave the responses in the peculiar manner of the Jews, which reminds one of the buzzing of a swarm of flies when disturbed, and they swayed their bodies all the time with the extraordinary bobbing motion which always accompanies their prayers.

Strange and indeed unique is the spectacle, and

it reminds one forcibly of the unchanged character of the Jews. After nineteen centuries of wandering and exile, they are still the same as ever, still bound by the iron chain of Talmudic law, a people whose slavery to custom outruns even that of the Chinese to etiquette, and whose veneration for the past appears to preclude the possibility of progress or improvement in the present.

Entering by the gate of the Cotton Bazaar, we stand at length within the Temple courts. Before us are the steps which lead up to the platform where shoes must be removed; for while the outer court, like the old Court of the Gentiles, is a promenade, the paved platform is a sacred enclosure, not to be trodden except barefoot.

From the bright sunlight we pass suddenly into the deep gloom of the interior, lit with the "dim religious light" of the glorious purple windows. The gorgeous colouring, the painted wood-work, the fine marble, the costly mosaics, the great dome flourished all over with arabesques and inscriptions, and gilded to the very top, all this splendour gleams out here and there from the darkness.

And in honour of what is this beautiful chapel built? A low canopy of rich silk covers the dusty limestone ledge round which the "Dome of the Rock" has risen. The Rock of Paradise is the scene of Mohammed's ascension, the source of the rivers of Paradise, the Place of Prayer of all the Prophets, the Foundation-stone of the World.

Such was the holy spot enshrined by the Dome. The sacred rock, recovered and purified by Omar, was soon after enclosed by the Caliph Abd el Melek, and the inscriptions on the walls give the history of this building with most remarkable detail.

The Arab historians relate that the Dome of the Chain was the model for the Dome of the Rock. Now this is possible, if we except the outer wall of the latter. Take that wall away, and you have a building consisting of two concentric polygons, with pillars bound together by a wooden beam, and supporting arcades. The Dome of the Rock is just three times the size of the Dome of the Chain, and the various measures of plan and height are proportional. The smaller building may therefore have been originally the model of the larger.

Over the outer arcade of the Dome of the Rock runs the great Cufic inscription, giving the date of the erection of the building in 688 A.D. The name of Abd el Melek has been taken out at a later period, and that of Mamûn substituted, but the clumsy forger has forgotten the date, and has used a lighter blue in the grounding, thus the antiquity of the text is the more confirmed by the alteration.

This inscription dates the arcade, and thus apparently the inner circle, but not necessarily the outer wall, which may be later. The doors in

this outer wall bear Cufic inscriptions dating 831 A.D., at which time Mamûn restored the building; the beams in the roof resting on the wall bear the date 931 A.D. In the ninth century the pointed arch began to be used by the Arabs, and the outer wall cannot be dated later than this; but if it be, as may naturally be supposed, of the same date with its doors, it is part of the work of El Mamûn, and this agrees with the idea that 'Abd el Melek's Dome of the Rock consisted of two concentric arcades only, proportional to those of the Dome of the Chain. The symmetry of the proportions is altogether destroyed by the great breadth of the larger building in comparison with its height, which is due simply to the addition of the outer wall. Once remove the outer wall, and the pleasing proportions of the Dome of the Chain are reproduced to three times their scale.

The Dome of the Rock belongs to that obscure period of Saracenic art when the Arabs had not as yet created an architectural style of their own, and when they were in the habit of employing Byzantine architects to build their mosques. Among the rare specimens of their work at this time, is the Mosque of 'Amrû, at Cairo, commenced in 642 A.D., and apparently almost rebuilt by that very 'Abd el Melek whose work in Jerusalem we are now considering.

Of the Egyptian building Mr. Fergusson writes: "It probably now remains in all essential parts as

left by these two Caliphs" ('Abd el Melek and his successor, Walid). It is therefore very interesting to compare the Jerusalem Haram with the Cairo mosque, and the resemblance is striking.

In both there is a large rectangular area surrounded by colonnades; the pillars in the Cairo mosque are torn from older buildings, and support round arches, and a wooden beam runs above the capitals,—details also observable in the Dome of the Rock.

In both cases there is a mosque on the south wall of the enclosure, that at Jerusalem being, however, a Christian church adapted to Moslem worship, as is the great mosque at Damascus, also partly rebuilt by Walid.

In both the enclosures there is also the same feature of an octagonal building in the centre of the area, with an inner arcade supporting the dome; and this kind of structure is found in many other mosques at Damascus and in Cairo, being essentially an Arab building, suited either to give shade to a fountain useful for ablutions before prayer, or for the protection of some spot sacred as the Mukam or "standing-place" of a saint or prophet. Such is the Dome of the Rock, not a mosque, as it is sometimes wrongly called, but a "station" in the outer court of the Aksah mosque.

In 831 A.D. the Caliph El Mamûn restored the Dome of the Rock, and if I am correct, enclosed

it with an outer wall and gave it its present appearance. The beams in the roof of the arcade bear, as above stated, the date 913 A.D.: a well-carved wooden cornice, hidden by the present ceiling, must then have been visible beneath them.

In 1016 A.D. the building was partly destroyed by earthquake. To this date belong restorations of the original mosaics in the dome, as evidenced by inscriptions. The present wood-work of the cupola was erected by Husein, son of the Sultan Hakem, as shown by an inscription dated 1022 A.D.

The place next fell into the hands of the Crusaders, who christened it Templum Domini, and established in 1112 A.D. a chapter of Canons. The Holy Rock was then cut into its present shape and covered with marble slabs, an altar being erected on it. The works were carried on from 1115 A.D. to 1136 A.D. The beautiful iron grille between the pillars of the dome and various fragments of carved work are of this date, including small altars with sculptured capitals, having heads upon them—abominations to the Moslem, yet still preserved within the precincts. The interior of the outer wall was decorated in the twelfth century with frescoes, traces of which still remain. The exterior of the same wall is surmounted by a parapet, with dwarf pillars and arches, which is first mentioned by John of Wurtzburg, but must be as old as the round

arches of the windows below. The Crusaders would seem to have filled up the parapet arches, and to have ornamented the whole with glass mosaic, as at Bethlehem.

In 1187 A.D. Saladin won the city, tore up the altar, and once more exposed the bare rock, covered up the frescoes with marble slabs, and restored and regilded the dome, as evidenced by an inscription in it dating 1189 A.D.

In 1318 A.D. the lead outside and the gilding within were restored by Nakr ed Dîn, as evidenced by an inscription.

In 1520 A.D. the Sultan Soliman cased the bases and upper blocks of the columns with marble. The wooden cornice, attached to the beam between the pillars, seems to be of this period, and the slightly pointed marble casing of the arches under the dome is probably of the same date. The windows bear inscriptions of 1528 A.D. The whole exterior was at this time covered with Kishâni tiles, attached by copper hooks, as evidenced by inscriptions dated 1561 A.D. The doors were restored in 1564 A.D., as also shown by inscriptions.

The date of the beautiful wooden ceiling of the cloisters is not known, but it partly covers the Cufic inscription, and this dates 72 A.H. (688 A.D.), and it hides the wooden cornice, dating probably 913 A.D. The ceiling is therefore probably of the time of Soliman.

DOME OF THE ROCK.

CAPITALS SUPPORTING THE DRUM.



Clauds R Conder Lieut R.E.
20.2.73

* To face page 323, Vol. I.

In 1830 A.D. the Sultan Mahmûd, and in 1873—5 A.D. the late 'Abd el 'Azîz, repaired the Dome, and the latter period was one specially valuable for those who wished to study the history of the place.

Such is a plain statement of the gradual growth of the building. The dates of the various inscriptions on the walls fully agree with the circumstantial accounts of the Arab writers who describe the Dome of the Rock.

The materials employed were all apparently designed for their present uses and positions, with exception of the columns supporting the dome and the outer arcade. These have a Byzantine character, and they appear to have been torn from some other building or buildings, probably from Christian churches, just as in the case of the Mosque of 'Amrû at Cairo, or like the pillars which Jezzar Pacha at Acre collected for his mosque. Of every capital in the place I made a careful sketch, as shown in the illustration; of those under the dome only three are alike. The cross is said to occur on one boss, as at Bethlehem. I have searched for this in vain, though I have a sketch of every boss, but there would be no impossibility in its presence if the pillar came from a church. The bases differ as much as the capitals, as we saw when the marble slabs were removed in 1875. The shafts are also of various heights and diameters, and one at least is upside down, with

the capital of another pillar placed on its base end.

Leaving this beautiful and interesting building we crossed the platform southward, having on our right the old sundial, which the Crusaders held to mark the site of the Temple altar; and passing the beautiful summer pulpit we descended to the southern court. The most picturesque view is from this point. The Dome of the Rock is seen behind the venerable cypresses of the lower court —a great cupola on which sit innumerable doves, while, beneath it, the walls are resplendent with the harmonious colouring of the tiles—white, blue, green, black, and yellow, in elegant tracery which cannot now be imitated. In front are the flat steps leading up to the pillars and arches called "balances" by the Moslems, and below them, and the little chambers of the Sheikhs who live in the enclosure.

The black fanatics who guard the holy place lounged among the trees, and a funeral procession was slowly marching, with subdued murmurs, round the Chapel of the Rock, while, by a curious coincidence, a gorgeous wedding-party in bright coloured silks, was also approaching the same place.

The great enclosure outside the platform is not paved; it is covered with grass and planted with olives and cypresses. Only the platform is fairly level, and its flagging in parts is covered with

Crusading masons'-marks. There is, as above noticed, only one mosque in the enclosure—the great building on the south wall. The whole area is called Haram esh Sherîf, "High Sanctuary," and Masjid el Haram, "Praying-place of Sanctuary;" also sometimes Masjid el Aksa, "the far-off praying-place," in allusion to its distance from Mecca and to the Prophet's long night journey. The mosque itself is called Jami'a el Aksa, or the "far-off meeting-house." To it we next repaired.

The history of the mosque differs from that of the Dome of the Rock. Justinian, in the sixth century, erected a basilica in honour of the Virgin, partly supported by vaults beneath. The remains of such a basilica are distinguishable in the Aksa, and the vault beneath the mosque has the peculiarity of Byzantine vaulting—the narrow keystone, which is not found in the round arches of the Kubbet es Sakhrah, or Dome of the Rock.

In 637 A.D. the Church of St. Mary was visited by Omar, and the "station" where he prayed is still shown in the Aksa. In 688 A.D. Abd el Melek covered the doors with gold and silver plates. Additions were made in the eighth century, and the width of the building was increased. The Crusaders called the place Solomon's Palace, Solomon's Porch, or Solomon's Temple. The Templars remodelled it, adding an apse on the east and a long hall on the west. Again it fell into Moslem hands, and further

alterations were made; thus at the present day it presents a confusion of style and plan requiring the eye of a practised architect to distinguish the various additions.

The general effect is poor, for the interior is white-washed and coarsely painted; only at the south end do any remains of the old glass mosaics still exist, and here are found close together the beautiful pulpit of parquetted wood-work from Damascus, and the new glass chandelier from Constantinople, the twisted columns of the Templars' dining-hall, and the heavy basket-work capitals of the Byzantine basilica, while, in the vault beneath, is the huge monolith, which three men can scarcely girth, supporting the porch of the Temple-gate — a mixture of styles which cannot perhaps be found in any other building in the world.

Many chapters might be written on the High Sanctuary and its buildings, but space is wanting to describe the gates, the underground passages, the chambers and cisterns, which I again and again explored, and which had, already, been minutely examined and described by Major Wilson and Captain Warren. We must hasten therefore to another building, surpassing in interest even the Temple enclosure itself, namely, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

It is a grim and wicked old building that we now approach. No other edifice has been directly

the cause of more human misery, or defiled with more blood. There are those who would willingly look upon it as the real place of the Saviour's Tomb, but I confess that, for myself, having twice witnessed the annual orgy which disgraces its walls, the annual imposture which is countenanced by its priests, and the fierce emotions of sectarian hate and blind fanaticism which are called forth by the supposed miracle, and remembering the tale of blood connected with the history of the Church, I should be loth to think that the Sacred Tomb had been a witness for so many years of so much human ignorance, folly, and crime.

The place is nevertheless venerable from its many memories, for whether or no it encloses the Sepulchre of Christ, it may at least claim to be the site which Christians, from the fourth century downwards, have venerated as such. Of this we cannot well have any doubt when we review the descriptions of the place which have been written in consecutive centuries, including several recently published.

Jerome places Golgotha north of Sion, and the early Christians included under the title Sion only the Upper City of Josephus. Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons, writing in 440 A.D., repeats this description of its position, and speaks of Siloam as below the city wall, and beneath the precipitous *eastern* rock of Sion—a description of relative position which can only apply to the hill now known as

Mount Sion. Jerome himself speaks of Sion as the citadel of the town, which is still true of the modern site.

Theodorus, in 530 A.D., is quite as explicit with regard to the position of the church. "In the middle of the city," he says, "is a basilica; from the west side you may enter to the Holy Resurrection, where is the Sepulchre of our Lord Jesus Christ, and there is the Mount of Calvary, to which Mount the way is by steps, and it is under one roof."

We know by contemporary evidence (the Pascal Chronicle) that this Basilica of Constantine was destroyed, in 614 A.D., by Chosroes the Persian. Several small chapels were soon after erected instead, by the monk Modestus, and they are described in 630 A.D. In 700 A.D. Arculphus gives a detailed account of these new buildings, including the round Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the square Church of the Virgin, the Chapel of Golgotha, and, on the east, the Basilica of Constantine separated by an open space from the round church and from Golgotha. The relative positions of Calvary and of the Sepulchre in this account, are the same described by the previous writers, and by Eusebius in his history of the building of the original Basilica in 333 A.D. Arculphus' description of the Sepulchre as a place "large enough to allow nine men to pray standing," might have been written of the Holy Tomb in the present church.

In 722 A.D. it is again described, and the door of the tomb is then said to be, as it still is, on the east.

We are thus able to identify the site chosen by Constantine in the fourth century, with that recognised in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. The chapels of Modestus were destroyed, according to contemporary writers, in 1009 A.D. by the mad Caliph Hakem, but were restored in 1048. From the year 1033 down to 1099 A.D. innumerable pilgrimages took place, but accounts of the buildings are not known. The Crusaders, however, replaced the third system of churches by a magnificent cathedral, and united once more the Sepulchre and Calvary under one roof. Their erection dated from 1103 A.D., and remained intact till 1808, when it was partly destroyed by fire; the southern façade is however still attributable to the twelfth century. Of the position of the Crusading site there is also no doubt, and it is shown on charts of the fourteenth century. Sæwulf, in 1102 A.D., places the site of Calvary "on the *declivity* of Mount Sion," thus agreeing with Eucherius, who had described it in the fifth century as "placed outside Mount Sion, where a knoll of scanty size exists to the north." Both these expressions fit well, as the plan will show, with the actual site of the present building.

We approach the church from the south, where is an open court in which, according to the legend,

the Wandering Jew stays for a moment once in every century to beg admission, and hears a voice which bids him resume his endless journey. In front of us rise the beautiful Gothic doorways, the pillars scrawled over with the names of pilgrims, and with dates from the fourteenth century downwards; beneath our feet lies old Philip D'Aubigny, close by the threshold, and over his head each year thousands of pilgrims press through the narrow portal.

Passing through the doorway we enter the vestibule, in which is the Stone of Unction, a slab of marble with lanterns of ground-glass hung above it. On the left is the diwân of the Turkish custodians, to the right the stairs of the Chapel of Calvary, beneath which is the place where the "rent in the rock" is shown, and where are the tombs of Godfrey and Baldwin. Huge wax candles, reaching half way to the lofty roof, flank the Stone of Unction, which is devoutly kissed by the pilgrims. Passing round it to the left, the rotunda of the church is reached; to the right a narrow passage, with small chapels, runs behind the apses of the Greek Church, and here a flight of steps leads down to the subterranean Chapel of Helena, with its picturesque lighting and heavy eighth-century basket-work capitals; beneath this again is the dark cave so suggestively named "Chapel of the Invention of the Cross."

The rotunda is well lighted, with a dome light

blue in colour, and covered with golden lilies and arabesques; the drum is of good white stone. In the centre rises the old Chapel of the Sepulchre, dark and gloomy, of marble discoloured by age, surmounted by a queer cupola of Italian taste, and ornamented all along the top with gilt nosegays and modern-framed pictures. Its entrance is flanked by very handsome marble candlesticks, and in front of the vestibule are hung beautiful gold and silver lamps, suspended by chains, and glowing with a subdued light through glass cups, red, yellow, and green; they number forty-three in all, thirteen for Franciscans, Greeks, and Armenians respectively, and four for the poor Copts.

Stooping to enter, we pass into the vestibule or Chapel of the Angel, walled with marble slabs, and thence into the inner Chapel of the Sepulchre itself, where the darkness is only relieved by the glowing lamps over the altar on the Tomb.

The most impressive portion of the church is, however, the nave east of the rotunda belonging to the Greeks, with its great screen in front of the three eastern apses. The floor is unoccupied, save by the short column marking the "centre of the world." The dome above is poor, rudely whitewashed, and painted in fresco, with the long strings of globular lamps usually seen in Greek churches; but the glory of the place consists in the huge screen and the panelling of the side walls. Into the panelling dark pictures are framed, and

gilded thrones for the bishop and patriarch stand; one each side, beyond the dark wooden choir-stalls. The screen towers up to the roof, and presents figures, in rows one above another, standing in canopied recesses, but all in low relief: in the screen are the gates of the apses, and over each gate is a little purple glass lamp, the colour of which, in the gloom and beside the tarnished gilding, is truly magnificent. Four candlesticks of grey marble beautifully carved, the central pair eight feet high, stand before the steps to the screen; they are presents from the Czar, and have the Russian eagle on them.

Passing over without description the many minor chapels, which are dingy and uninteresting, there remains only the Chapel of Calvary to notice. It is as dark as the greater part of the rest of the church, yet on arriving at the top of the steep stairs, the general effect is a blaze of gold. Nearly the whole of the east end is occupied by the Greek altar. The pictures above it have been covered with gold plates, leaving only the faces visible. The lamps are gold, the sacred vessels are gold. The roof is very low, and painted in well executed and ancient fresco on a blue ground. A faint smell of rosewater pervades the chapel, mingled with an odour of stale incense.

Sunday after Sunday we revisited the venerable church, and followed the brown Franciscans in

their march round the sacred stations, listening to the deep sonorous tones of their chant. On one occasion this was suddenly drowned by the high nasal scream of the Armenians, and we found the celebrant of the latter rite in the Calvary Chapel,—a priest with a long beard and peaked Armenian hood. The responses were made by black-robed acolytes in fezzes, and a second minister, in gaudy robes, with a gilt-paper crown much too large for him, swung a censer. The Latin ritual seemed simple and dignified, its music melodious, and its ministers reverential, when contrasted with the unearthly screeching and childish mummeries of the Oriental sect.

The plaintive chant of the Franciscans attracted us to the spot where the officiating priest stood, at the door of the Chapel of the Angel. The monks knelt in a double row, and the scene was impressive; the background was formed by the great screen; in front was the dark chapel—a church within a church. Not less affecting was the aspect of the congregation, many with sad pale faces telling of no common histories. One man especially used to draw my attention; light-haired, pale, gaunt, and shabby, kneeling with his little taper in one hand, the other held out in an attitude of entreaty; his wild eyes were fixed on the marble Tomb, as though he could hardly believe that, after many miles of journey, he at last really beheld the Holy Sepulchre. In him

one might fancy a penitent of the old Crusading times, sent on pilgrimage to expiate some great crime; and the memories of seven centuries rose up; of the king who refused to be crowned where his Master had suffered; of the strong men in mail who had knelt in tears on these stones, and clanked their iron heels about the church; of the time when the proudest chivalry of Europe had devoted their lives to redeem the few feet of rock, where they believed the Holy Saviour to have hung on the cross.

But the time to see the church is the season of Easter. In 1873, and 1875 I was present at the so-called Holy Fire. On the first occasion alone, on the second with Lieut. Kitchener, with whom I rode sixty miles in one day from Gaza to see the spectacle.

On the evening before the day of the Fire, the whole huge building was full of pilgrims, and the long winding passages and galleries were blocked with human beings, fast asleep, crouched against the walls or extended on mattresses. In the passage from the door to the rotunda, Armenian women were propped in long rows against the walls, on a kind of bench. Most of the pilgrims were asleep, but some still showed by frequent crossings, prostrations, and sighs, that the keenness of their ecstasy was unabated.

In 1875 the pilgrimage to Neby Mûsa was oing on at the same time, and parties of wild

fanatical Moslems paraded the streets of Jerusalem, bearing green banners surmounted with the crescent and inscribed with Arabic texts. A body-guard armed with battle-axes, spears, and long brass-bound guns accompanied each flag, and a couple of big drums with cymbals followed. It speaks well for the Turks, that with all the elements of a bloody riot thus ready to hand, with crowds of fanatics, Christian and Moslem, in direct contact, still no disturbances occurred.

By 11.30 a.m. on the 19th of April, 1873, and by the same time on the 22nd of April, 1875, we had been marshalled to a place in the Latin gallery, west of the Sepulchre, and looking down on the rotunda. Between the Chapel of the Sepulchre and the rotunda wall is a space some fifteen paces wide; a double line of Turkish soldiers kept open a narrow lane, in the middle of this space, round the tomb—a lane sufficiently wide for three men to walk abreast. On either side the crowd was packed against the rotunda wall, and against that of the Sepulchre chapel, and packed so thickly, that it seemed impossible for one single body more to be squeezed in. To say that you could walk on the heads of the crowd conveys but a poor idea of its compactness; the whole mass seemed welded into one body, and any movement of a single individual swayed the entire crowd, which seemed to tremble like a huge jelly.

But who can describe this wonderful scene? The sunlight came down from above on the north side where the Greeks were gathered, while on the south all was in shadow. The mellow grey of the marble was lit up, and a white centre of light was formed by the caps, shirts, and veils of the native Christians.

A narrow cross-lane was made at the fire-hole on the north side, and here first two, and in 1875 six herculean guardians, in jerseys and with handkerchiefs bound to their heads, kept watch—the only figures plainly distinguishable among the masses.

The effect of colour was remarkable; it seemed to run in patches, as all of one nationality were near one another. In the sunlight, brown faces and arms, salmon colour, pink, light blue, and cinnamon in the clothing, were blended with the white, but, in the shadow, the dark blue uniforms, the black dresses of nuns, and the brown frieze and red sashes of the Armenians, were streaked across by the long line of the soldiers' red fezzes.

On the west a striking contrast was observable; here stood and sat the Abyssinians and Copts, silent and dusky, with many women among them, some with small babies in their arms, whose cries of half suffocation were plainly heard above the din of many voices and many languages. The Coptic men were in loose dark robes, with white, twisted turbans, the women were closely veiled, in flow-

ing indigo-coloured garments. The Abyssinians, swathed in voluminous white drapery, sat gloomily silent against the wall. On the east a few Arabs were gathered, also in dark robes, and behind them was seen the rich colouring of the Greek chancel, dark and dusky in the dim light.

The pilgrims had been standing in their places for at least ten hours, yet they showed no signs of weariness. Every face was turned to the fire-hole, and but one interest seemed to absorb them, save when the great pewter cans of water, supplied by the charity of the priests, were brought round.

The variety of national character was also remarkable. Patient and stolid the Russians and Armenians stood in their places, and a little forest of candles rose from amongst them, ready to receive the fire, each pilgrim having a bunch of perhaps a dozen in his hand. Silent and motionless sat the Egyptians, awaiting the event with all the apathy and dignified indifference of Orientals. On the north, however, an entirely different scene was enacted. Here stood the Greek Christians, mostly Syrians by birth, who were worked up into a state of hysterical frenzy which would not allow them to be quiet for a moment, and which seemed ever on the increase. Every now and then a man would struggle on to the shoulders of his neighbours; in one case six arms, extended full length, supported him, three to each foot, whilst his baggy trousers were grasped to keep

him steady; another man was pushed and rolled along, over the people's heads, as if he was swimming. These individuals became fugle-men, and led the numerous well-known chants, of which I collected the following.

"Hádha Kúb-er Sáid—ná."

This is the most common chant, meaning "This is the Tomb of our Lord," and repeated by hundreds of voices in perfect time with the accentuation as given above. Another chant was to the same cadence:

"A'llah únser és Sul—tán."

"God help the Sultan." The next was rarely heard:

"Yá Ye-húd, Yá Ye-húd,
'Aíde-kúm, 'Aíd el ku-rúd."

"O Jews, O Jews! your feast is a feast of apes."

Two longer chants were also used pretty frequently.

"El Messíh 'Atá-na
Bi dumhu, Ishterá-na
Ahna el yóm fe-rána
Wa el Ye-húd hizá-na."

"The Christ is given us, with His blood He bought us. We celebrate the day, and the Jews bewail."

"Sebt en Nár wa 'Aíd-na
Wa hádha kub-er Sa-ídna."

"The seventh is the fire and our feast, and this is the Tomb of our Lord."

Nothing was more remarkable than the patience of the soldiery who had to keep order. The Greeks gave most trouble, and in 1873 the feeling evinced by them was very bitter, because their favourite Patriarch had just been deposed. A very fat old colonel walked up and down, armed with a murderous *kurbaj*, or whip of hippopotamus hide; then he would sit on the floor and look at the crowd, sometimes putting an additional big soldier at a weak point in the line. The men were armed with the Snider, and were very stalwart and tall. Sometimes the crowd became dangerous, and hissed. As fast as his legs could carry him, the Colonel rushed to the spot, and down came the whip; then where a moment before were angry faces and arms stretched out with clenched fists, there was suddenly nothing but a flat surface of backs, or a few arms raised to protect the heads. Yet on the whole it was a good-natured crowd, and the soldiers were wonderfully patient. Little incidents of a comic nature occurred, and an Arab chief, who tried to swagger down the lane, found his head-shawl off and far away in a moment, tossed from hand to hand amid shouts of laughter.

Two wooden galleries were erected, under the arches to the west, each three storeys high; and

here sat native women of the better class, in their best silks, yellow and red stuffs, cachemire shawls, white muslin and blue cloth, with flashing eyes and painted faces. They lay scattered over the bright carpets, presenting an effect of colour more brilliant than that of the broad masses of sombre tints below.

About one o'clock in the afternoon, the natives of Jerusalem arrived — a long wave of human beings bursting suddenly in from the south, and surging along the narrow lane. Many were stripped to their vests and drawers—in regular fighting costume. They rushed at the fire-hole, and the first comers thrust their arms into it to keep their places. The effect of this crowd within a crowd—a moving wave, ploughing through the two packed masses—was very curious. No sooner was it pushed and swept into place and the lane cleared, than it burst into one long loud shout of repetition—

"Hádha kúb-er Sáid—ná!
Hádha kúb-er Sáid—ná!"

which was repeated twenty or thirty times at a breath; and a big man was hoisted up, and fairly pounded the walls of the Sepulchre with his fist, shrieking the same refrain and pointing at the chapel with his fingers, while the crowd joined in the last syllable — a tremendous shout of "Na!"

And now the rotunda contained some 2000

persons, and the church probably 10,000 in all, when, at 2.15 p.m., the procession was formed, and the nasal chant of the priests was heard in the Greek church.

First came the banners, looking very shabby, the crosses above them bent on one side in bygone fights. The procession was a short and hurried one; the old Patriarch (just elected in 1872) had a frightened air, and shuffled along, flanked by the Archimandrite and by another dignitary, each carrying a great silver globe, with holes in it, mounted on a silver handle, and intended to hold the fire. The tuneless singing was interrupted by the chorus of the crowd and the shrill cries of the women. For a moment, in 1873, there seemed danger of a riot. A man raised his arm and shouted something at the Patriarch in a loud voice. Instantly an officer was on the spot; the man, who had hidden, was dragged out, held by the legs, and beaten over head and face, then thrust back into the crowd, and an extra guard placed over him.

And now a moment of breathless silence followed. Many faces were raised to the roof, perhaps expecting the fire to drop through the quiet shaft of light above, or the dove, which used to be let loose, to appear. Two priests stood bareheaded by the fire-hole, guarded by the giants on either side.

Suddenly a lighted torch was in their hands

passed from within, where was the Patriarch. The two priests turned and fled, and the giants closed in round them, trampling like furies through the crowd. In a moment the thin line of soldiers was gone, and two huge hustling masses surged up like waves round the great torch, which, now high, now low, was tossed on the seething flood, scattering sparks right and left, but gradually drifting towards the exterior of the church, where the horseman sat, ready to take the fire to Bethlehem. A great forest of arms was stretched out towards the torch, and they seemed to writhe like serpents after it; but not a single taper was lighted. Soon, however, other torches were passed out of the fire-hole, and the fire spread over the church, as the roar grew louder and louder. A flame next broke out behind the grating of the Coptic chapel, and a yet more wonderful scene here presented itself. The dark mass of blue and black was streaked with livid flesh-colour, as bare arms stretched towards the light with their bundles of tapers. Woe to the owner of the taper first lit; it was snatched from him, and extinguished by a dozen others thrust into it. Delicate women and old men fought like furies; long black turbans flew off and uncoiled like snakes on the ground, and what became of the babies I do not know.

The change from the stagnation of the motionless crowd to the wild storm now raging was as marvellous as it was sudden. The flame spread,

seeming to roll over the whole crowd, till the church was a sea of fire, which extended over the roof of the chapel, and ran up the galleries and along the choir. Meantime a dreadful bell was clanging away, and the grey-bearded Patriarch was borne out aloft into the chancel, on the shoulders of a body-guard of priests. A dense blue fog, made by the smoke, and a smell of burning wax rose up, and above all the quiet gleam of light shone down from the roof.

The fury of the crowd seemed to increase. A stalwart negro, struggling and charging like a mad bull, ran round the church, followed by the writhing arms; then, as all got their candles lighted, men might be seen bathing in the flame, and singeing their clothes in it, or dropping wax over themselves as a memorial, or even eating it. The dancing is not allowed now; but here and there knots were formed, of men who jumped and hopped, rolling along the centre and out of the church. The whip came down on crowd and soldiers alike, until the lane had been re-formed; and at last the excitement abated, as the gorgeous second procession came forth in an endless string.

This procession is the grandest to be seen in Jerusalem, but only a few of the Greeks assist at it.

First came a priest in yellow, with a crown and great jewelled cross, flanked by others in pink satin, with censers; four banners followed, and six

priests in embroidered cloth of gold; next came twenty Armenians in cloth of silver; next, two censer-bearers with red-and-gold crowns, and four priests in cloth of gold, with candles; then came the Armenian bishop, in a huge cope lined with rose satin, with a white beard and a gigantic mitre of gold, having a central medallion of enamel; on each side of him was a priest in a black cap, holding his robe. Next came the Copts, with six banners, a cross, and two books in silver covers; the priests in cloth of gold, with crowns of red-velvet and gold; then six monks in the same, with white hoods; two censer-bearers with yellow tippets, and crowns; followed by the Coptic bishop, in cloth of silver lined with crimson, and with a great silver crown; two acolytes and a banner-bearer in silver and white went before him. A cross, four banners, and two censers were borne next; then came four priests in silver embroidered with blue, bearing books in rich silver covers; then the Syrian bishop, in plain cloth-of-gold, with a hood of the same; and behind him a banner, borne by a priest in pink and silver robes embroidered with flowers.

Again in the evening we went to the church, and found our way into the gallery, where we remained till one in the morning. The crowd was almost as thick, but the majority were Russian women; and the old cry, "Hadha kuber Saidna," still rang at intervals. A new procession of eighty priests and seven crowned bishops

in silver robes was formed, these being of the Greek rite. The glare of countless candles lit up the scene; and after the procession had gone thrice round the Tomb, the bells began clanging, the crowd roared, and all the banners and crosses were spun round and round with a rapid whirl, till the flashing, the noise, and this extraordinary spinning of the flags made one giddy.

Such is a plain account of this wonderful feast, from notes made on the spot. The Latins have long discountenanced the imposture, though it was once recognised by them, and dates back to the miraculous lighting of lamps in the time of the Christian kings of Jerusalem. Every educated Greek knows it to be a shameful imposition; but the ignorant Syrians and the fanatical Russian peasants still believe the fire to descend from heaven. The clergy dare not enlighten them, and that crafty diplomacy which encourages pilgrimages to Jerusalem by government aid, fosters the superstition which is the main inducement for the Russian pilgrims to visit the Holy City.



THE TEMPLE WALL.

CHAPTER XII.

THE TEMPLE AND CALVARY.

THE present account of Jerusalem is, of necessity, only a sketch ; the subject cannot be treated fully in two chapters, but requires a volume to itself. I have, therefore, confined myself to the two main points of interest—the Temple and the site of Calvary—hoping to have some other occasion of utilising notes, which represent the results of two seasons of continual prowling about the city, and of long study of its antiquities.

In the present chapter the results of my own

studies are given in brief; the theories are neither entirely original nor very startling, for a simple reason—that originality would be only another term for perversity, in the face of the accumulation of hard facts available.

One important addition to our information remained still to be made when Captain Warren left Jerusalem; this was to ascertain accurately the lie of the rock within the city, under the accumulation of rubbish. To this point Captain Warren had directed my attention, and had told me how much valuable knowledge might be acquired. By his introduction, I made the acquaintance of Herr Konrad Schick, the architect of the Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews. Not only has this careful and patient workman himself erected many houses in the city, but, his professional ability being fully recognised by the Turks, he has been constantly consulted by the Government, and has had opportunities of examining buildings in every part of Jerusalem. All this valuable information remained still unapplied to the use of antiquarians.

I gave Mr. Schick a copy of the Ordnance Survey map, on which Major Wilson, R.E., has shown all the present levels in the city, and he kindly undertook to mark accurately every spot where, from digging foundations, examining drains, etc., he was able to give the depth below the surface at which the native rock was reached.

During my stay in the city, I also visited with him many places where it can be seen near the surface. From Mr. Schick I received this record of rock heights in April, 1873, and I added to it the measurements which I made at the Zion Scarp in 1875, and at Chamber No. 24 in the Haram in 1872. The total number of distinct observations amounts to nearly 200, without counting those made by Major Wilson and Captain Warren in the Haram.

With this material I constructed a map, showing by contours at ten feet vertical intervals the apparent lie of the rock below the surface; and these form a continuation of Captain Warren's map of the Temple Hill. After the contours had been drawn and submitted to Mr. Schick for criticism I sent a copy to England. In 1874 new excavations were made, and the results entirely agreed with my contours. In 1876 further examination of the rock was obtained by Mr. Schick, and the measure, over a length of 100 feet, agreed again exactly with my contours. Still, the information is perhaps not sufficiently exact in some parts of the city to give certainty; and in deference to the valuable opinion of Major Wilson, I propose at present to publish, on a reduced scale, only the lines of the contours at intervals of fifty feet, concerning the general correctness of which there can hardly be any dispute. This is sufficient for the purpose in view; for while the error of a few feet

might be a blot on a plan aiming at perfect exactitude, an error of thirty or forty feet would not affect the matter at present under discussion, which is simply the relative position of the original hills on which the city stands.

I had also opportunities at various times of making explorations in the Haram which had not before been possible, especially as regards the north portion of the west wall, which I reached and examined in 1873. In 1874 I was able to examine the character of the masonry closing the great tunnels under the platform, numbered 1 and 3; and, in 1872, in company with Mr. Drake, I found a beautiful scarp of rock under the same platform, which had not previously been described. Such were the few gleanings I was able to add to the minute descriptions of Major Wilson, and to the invaluable discoveries of Captain Warren. Few though they be, these additions will be seen to have an interesting bearing on the antiquarian questions.

It is generally allowed that Herod's Temple occupied part, if not the whole, of the area of the "High Sanctuary;" but the question to be set at rest is the exact position of the Holy House and of its courts within that area. In the following pages I offer the explanation, which has resulted from a long and careful study of the subject, and which I hope merits serious consideration by those who are interested in the question.

The sources of our information as to the Temple are two—the first Josephus, the second the Talmud. The first is simply a general and pictorial account; the second is a laborious and minute description by men in whose eyes the subject was all-important; and the tract of the Mishna, called Middoth, or "measurements," gives the details of arrangement, in some parts, with an exactitude which is rare among Jews, and which allows of plans being made. We have also this great advantage—that all the scattered accounts in the Talmud have been summarised and arranged by the famous Maimonides, "the second Moses," a man of great ability and thoroughly trustworthy, and that every statement he makes in his systematic account of the Holy House can be traced back to the original passages hidden away in the Talmud.

While, therefore, it is from Josephus that we get a general idea of the appearance and arrangements of the Temple, it is from the Talmud, and from Maimonides, that we obtain that exact information which enables us to make a plan of the Holy House and of its courts.

A considerable initial difficulty arises, for Josephus makes the area of the Temple to have been a square furlong, or 625 feet side, and the Talmud gives it as 500 cubits, which, as will be seen, is probably 666 feet; but the Haram has a mean measurement of 982 feet by 1565 feet—a

trapezoid, containing an area of thirty-five acres, or three and a half times the area given by the Talmud. Thus the question arises, has the present boundary any connection with that of the Temple? And if it has, where are we to place the smaller area within the larger?

There are many indications leading to the conclusion that the present outer wall of the Haram is the old boundary of the Temple Hill. In the south-west corner we have the remains of the great bridge which Josephus so often mentions. The south wall is trisected by the line of the two underground portals, answering to the two Huldah or "Mole-gates" of the Temple. Captain Warren's excavations have also shown us that the south wall is all of one date and in one piece, with a "Master Course" six feet high, except near the west, where, for over 200 feet, this feature is wanting, and where the stones below the original surface existing at the time of the great bridge are less finished, being probably never visible. In the south-east corner, where the stones are smoothly finished down to the rock, are the Phœnician masons' marks, denoting the courses; and from this corner to the Golden Gate the masonry is apparently of the same character. The west wall has been examined for nearly half its length, and proves to be of the same style as that on the south-east. Finally, in 1873, I found the same masonry, in the north corner of

the west wall, reaching up to a higher level than that at which it was previously known in any other part of the Haram, and founded on rock. The natural conclusion is that all this beautiful and gigantic masonry is of one period, and formed one area. The question is, to what period does it belong?

I may, perhaps, insist upon an indication of date connected with the dressing of the stones, which I have never seen brought to bear on the question. Drafted masonry, imitating that on these walls, was used by Byzantine builders and by Crusading masons; but they never dressed their stones in the manner in which those of the Temple are dressed. This is distinctive and unique. It consists of a careful cross-chiselling, on the draft, and for a depth of three inches round the margin of the raised part of the stone —a regular "criss-cross" pattern, never found in the later masonry. This dressing also occurs *on the stones of the voussoirs of the great Tyropœon bridge*, an indication which I have never seen noticed before. The bridge and the wall then are, to all appearance, of one period; the lower courses of the wall are proved, by excavation, to be *in situ*, and thus the existing line must, I conclude, be referred to the time of the bridge. No one has disputed as to when this bridge was built. Captain Warren has shown that an older arch fell, and a pavement was made over it, before the

present ruined bridge was built; thus the present arch is generally thought to be not earlier than Herod's time; and hence the Haram wall is attributable, according to the indications obtained from its masonry (as was long ago pointed out by the Comte de Vogüé, arguing from different premises), to the time when Herod rebuilt the work of Solomon, and in part, if not altogether, "took away the old foundations" (Ant. xv. 11, 3).

On the north other important indications exist which require careful consideration. Josephus tells us that a tower called Baris (probably meaning "the castle") was built by Hyrcanus and repaired by Herod. It was on a hill which originally joined that of Bezetha, but was severed by an artificial trench. The fortress was re-named Antonia; it stood on a rock fifty cubits high (B. J. v. 5, 8), and at the north-west corner of the Temple, which it commanded, being on the "top of the hill" (B. J. vi. 1, 5). Now there is just such a rock-fortress in the north-west part of the Haram. It is a great scarp, with vertical faces on the south and north, standing up forty feet above the interior court, and separated from the north-eastern hill of Jerusalem by a ditch fifty yards broad, in which are now the "Twin Pools"—the Bethesda of St. Jerome. This block of rock is "the top of the hill," and occupies a length of 100 yards along the course of the north wall of the Haram. No other such scarp exists

in or near the enclosure of the "High Sanctuary." Can we, then, hesitate to place Antonia here?

The foregoing observations knit together the various parts of the Haram enclosure, as constituting a single building of one period. The east wall, from the Golden Gate southwards, is in one piece with the south wall; the S.W. corner has the remains of Herod's Bridge contemporary with the wall; the west wall is all of one style with the rest, and the N.W. corner is occupied by Antonia.

But we have still the north-east corner of the Haram to consider, and here we have, I think, indications that it was not originally part of the Temple enclosure. There is no rock north-east of the present platform for a great depth; a valley runs across this part of the area, and even the present surface is very low. It is also ascertained that the east wall has, near the north-east corner, a character distinct from the remainder, and much rougher, and that it runs beyond the present N.E. corner of the Haram without a break.

Nor can it, I think, well be doubted, that the north wall of the Haram, east of the rock scarp, is less ancient than the other walls. In the first place, the vaults in this part, which Captain Warren explored, and which I also visited, are Crusading or Saracenic work; they are of masonry, with groined roofs and pointed arches, not of rock, like the great passages under the platform. In the second place, the north wall is faced outside

with rough small masonry, which was once covered with the plaster of the great pool called Birket Israîl. This masonry is certainly more modern than the time of Herod, and the pool is never mentioned, in any account of Jerusalem before the twelfth century, about which period, perhaps, it was first constructed. Had a fine wall existed on the north side of the Haram, surely the cement would have been spread directly over it, and not over a facing of inferior stonework far more liable to leak. A boring through the wall would here be most valuable as an exploration, but, even without it, there is I think ample evidence that the N.E. corner of the Haram, east of Antonia, north of the Golden Gate, is not a part of Herod's enclosure, as its walls and subterranean vaults are distinct in character.

Assuming the outer boundary of the Temple Hill, to have been thus defined, as coinciding with the Haram walls except on the north-east, we have next to explain the statements of the Talmud, which make the "Mountain of the House" 500 cubits by 500.

The explanation is not difficult. Maimonides tells us, in a passage of which Dr. Chaplin kindly sent me a translation, in 1873: "The men who built the second Temple, when they built it in the days of Ezra, they built it like Solomon's, and in some things according to the explanation in Ezekiel."

The learned Professor Constantine l'Empereur, speaking of the same question in 1630 A.D., quotes the Talmud Commentary as follows:

"The Mountain of the House was to the north of Jerusalem, and the mountain was indeed much greater than five hundred cubits on each side would contain, but to the outer part of it the sanctity did not extend."

In this particular, then, the men of the second Temple followed the injunction in the Book of Ezekiel. "Five hundred long and five hundred broad, to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place" (Ezekiel xlii. 20); or, in the words of the Revelation (xi. 2): "The court which is without . . . measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles."

Thus the 500 cubits refers apparently to that part of the Temple, within the Soreg or Druphactos, which could not be entered by any Gentile.

The measurements of Josephus are only approximate. They cannot, as we have seen in the case of Cæsarea, be relied on for accuracy, and in one particular (the measurement of the altar) they are impossible. But it is otherwise with his general descriptions. Dimensions estimated in a distant country may be incorrect, and figures are liable to alteration in copying; but general position and arrangement we must accept, unless we condemn the author as thoroughly un-

trustworthy. As to the position of the Holy House, Josephus and the Talmudic writers are in accord. The Temple stood on the top of the hill, which, at first, was scarcely large enough for the Holy House and the Altar (B. J. v. 5, 1). This statement is the proper starting-point for any reconstructive plan of the Temple and its courts.

The top of the Temple Hill is, without dispute, the Sakhrah Rock; from it the mountain slopes down on all sides, and we now know accurately the general lie of the rock. At the Sakhrah, consequently, Josephus places the Holy House.

Three traditions consent in pointing to the same spot. In other cases, such as Joseph's Tomb, Jacob's Well, and the Tomb of Eleazar, we also find such a consent of tradition, and the latter sites are generally accepted as real. When, as in the case of Joshua's Tomb, traditions are not in accord, we get but little help from them; but, in the few instances where both Moslem and Christian traditions agree with that accepted by the Jews, we may fairly argue that from the Jews they were originally derived. This is the case in the present instance. A rock called "Stone of Foundation" (Eben Shatiyeh) existed, according to the Jews, in the Holy of Holies; round it the world was first gathered together, in it the Ark was hidden, and over it the Mercy-Seat originally stood. The same tradition seems to be repeated in the Crusading chronicles, and the Christians of

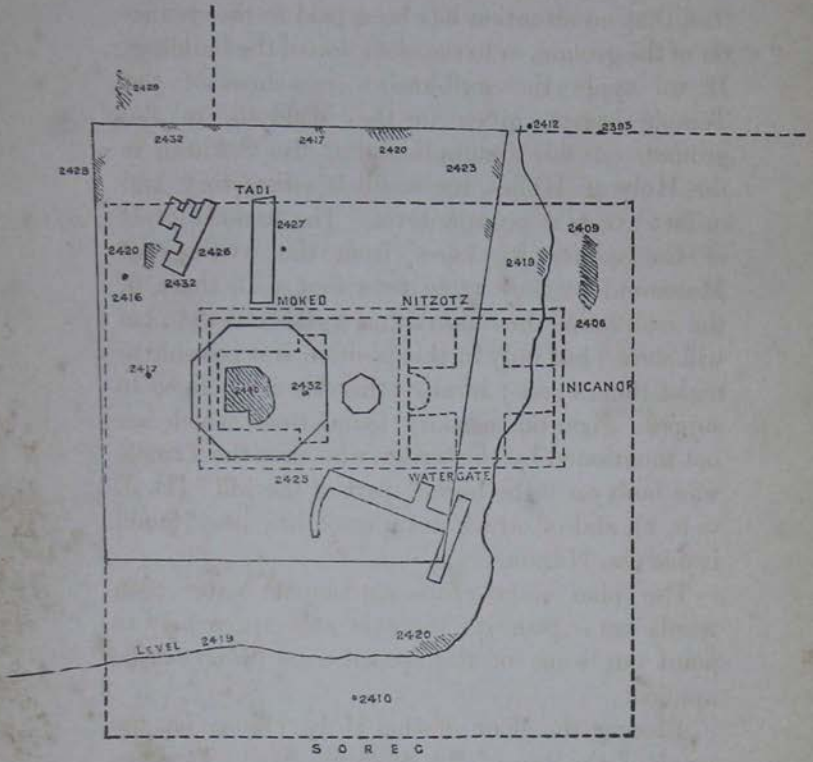
the twelfth century placed the Holy of Holies on the Sakhrah rock. Moslem tradition also connects the Sakhrah with the Stone of Foundation, for it is, in their eyes, the foundation of the world, as in the tradition of the Jews was the Eben Shatiyeh under the Holy of Holies.

After taking this position for the Holy of Holies as a starting-point, a serious question at once confronts us, namely, the length of the cubit. Here again we must trust to the Jews. The measure they used was not an Egyptian cubit, not a Babylonian cubit, not a Greek or Roman cubit; it was a measure of their own, the Hebrew Ammah. Maimonides tells us that the Temple cubit was of six hand-breadths, or forty-eight barley-corns, and any one who will take the trouble to measure barley-corns, will find that three go to the inch. This gives us sixteen inches for the cubit, or the average measure from the elbow to the first joint of the finger, which the Ammah is said to have been. I am the more inclined to accept this length, because I find that the Galilean synagogues, measured by it, give round numbers. Thus in the synagogue of Umm el 'Amed, which I measured in 1875, I found the pillars to be ten cubits high, their bases one cubit, their capitals half a cubit, and the synagogue itself thirty cubits by forty, taking the cubit used to have been sixteen inches.

The result obtained from these data is ex-

SITE OF HEROD'S TEMPLE

SHOWING THE ACTUAL LEVELS.



Scale of Feet

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

0 4 3 2 1 500

Scale of Cubits.

To face page 359, Vol. I.

tremely striking. The weak point of all restorations of the Temple which I have as yet seen is this, that no attention has been paid to the character of the ground, or to the elevation of the building. If we apply the well-known measures of the Temple courts, given in the Middoth, to the ground, on the assumption that the Sakhrah is the Holy of Holies, the result is satisfactory, and in fact exact, as regards level. The various levels of the courts we know from the writings of Maimonides; they agree to a foot with those of the rock round the Sakhrah, as a glance at the plan will show; but only in this position is it possible to make them agree; in any other we are obliged to suppose gigantic masonry foundations which are not mentioned by the writer who says the Temple was built on "the higher part of the hill" (B. J. v. 5, 2), and of which not a trace has been found inside the Haram.

The plan shows this agreement better than words can explain it; there is only space here to point out some of the special tests which can be applied.

Placing the floor of the Holy House on the level of the top of the Sakhrah, 2440 feet above the Mediterranean, the Altar-Court should be at a level six cubits lower (2432). The rock is actually known to have the level 2432, immediately west of the supposed position of the Altar on the present plan.

The Court of the Women should have a level 2418·6. The rock in this part is known to be lower than 2419 over a considerable area. The gates north and south of the Temple led down to a level about 2425. The rock in their immediate neighbourhood has been fixed at the levels 2425 and 2426. The outer part, near the Soreg or Wall of Partition, had, on the east, a level 2410. The rock is here known at the level 2409 and 2406.

Nor are these the only indications of exactness in detail. North of the Court of the Priests was the great Gate-house Moked, "the house of the fireplace," from which a gallery, apparently that noticed by Josephus (Ant. xv. 11, 7), ran under the Sanctuary to the subterranean gate Tadi or Teri, and from this gate the Bath-house was reached. The great subterranean passage called No. 1 on the Ordnance Survey, starts from the north wall of the Court of the Priests, as placed on the present plan, and it leads just as far as the boundary of the 500 cubits, where the level of the rock is apparently low. On this same line is the north end of the great excavation No. 3, which Captain Warren has proposed as representing the Bath-house; here then I would place Tadi, just outside the Sanctuary, close to the entrance of the Bath-house vault. I may remark that a visit in 1874 showed me that these great galleries are closed on the north by rude modern walls, probably built up just across their original entrances, which are

now covered with rubbish beneath the platform flags.

On the south we have another indication. The Water-Gate of the Holy House was on this side, and was connected with a cistern outside the Court of the Priests. A glance at the plan shows that the shaft leading down to the huge rock-cut reservoir No. 5, is on the present theory just outside the position of the Water-Gate as defined by the Mishna.

There is not space to go farther into detail, though the investigation has been pursued farther; but the above facts are, perhaps, sufficient to speak for themselves. We see the Holy House in its natural and traditional position, on the top of the mountain; we see the Courts descending on either side according to the present slopes of the hill; we find the great rock-galleries dropping naturally into their right places; and finally we see the Temple, by the immutability of Oriental custom, still a Temple, and the site of the great Altar still consecrated by the beautiful little Chapel of the Chain. Push the Temple a little to the north or south, and the levels cease to agree; lengthen the cubit to the Egyptian standard of twenty-one inches, and the exactitude of the adaptation is at once destroyed.

And now we must turn from this interesting question to one not less important—that of the position of Calvary. I have no wish to review the long controversies which have arisen on this

subject. But I may give in detail some new indications which appear to me of importance.

It is a recognised fact that Calvary was outside the city-wall that existed in the time of Our Lord. This fact was also understood by the early fathers, and Eusebius gives a long description of the growth of New Jerusalem, to account for the position of Constantine's site almost in the heart of the town. Sæwulf also, in 1108, says: "We know that Our Lord suffered without the gate, but the Emperor Hadrian, who was called Ælius, rebuilt Jerusalem and the Temple of the Lord, and added to the city as far as the Tower of David, which was previously a considerable distance from the city." St. Willibald (723 A.D.) echoes the same feeling, speaking of "the place of Calvary which was formerly outside of Jerusalem," and Sir John Maundeville (1322) says the same. Thus, even as early as the eighth century, attention had been drawn to the fact that the accepted site was apparently too near the middle of the city, but the modesty and faith of pilgrims rendered them willing to accept, without question, the answers which they received from the monks regarding their difficulty as to the site.

The main arguments in favour of the present site are two. The first, insisted on by the Comte De Vogüé and others, is the existence of an undoubted Jewish tomb, just outside the rotunda of the Church of the Sepulchre, and now called the Tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. This has been

cited as evidence that the place was outside the old city-wall, but we know from the Talmud that ancient half-forgotten tombs were allowed by the Jews to exist within Jerusalem, and any writer will admit that, in the time of Agrippa at least, this particular tomb was within the circuit of the town. The second argument, brought forward by Chateaubriand, is that tradition had handed down the site, and that its exact position was known in the fourth century, because Hadrian had built a Temple to Venus on the spot. Of the latter fact we have, apparently, no single intimation in any known author of the time of Hadrian, though several buildings of his in Jerusalem are noticed by contemporary writers; the story of this Temple of Venus is first mentioned by Eusebius two centuries later. As regards continuity of tradition, we have a break of eighty years between A.D. 70 and A.D. 150, during which time the Christians were absent from the city; finally we have no sound reason for supposing that the early Christians paid any attention to the site of the Sepulchre. As Jews, their horror of dead bodies would naturally have prevented their visiting a place which would pollute them; and had it been considered important to hand down the exact position of the Tomb, we should surely have had sufficient indications in the Gospel narrative to fix its locality, whereas, nothing can be gathered from the New Testament,

further than the statement of the Epistle that "Christ suffered without the gate" (Heb. xiii. 12), with the incidental remarks of St. John, that the Sepulchre was "nigh at hand" to Calvary (John xix. 42), and that Calvary was "nigh unto the city" (20).

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre stands near the centre of the lower part of modern Jerusalem, but this is unimportant, if it can be shown to have been outside the "second wall"—the northern boundary of Jerusalem in the time of Christ.

On this question the new rock levels have a most important bearing, and the indications obtained from them will now be summed up as concisely as the subject will allow.

The account which Josephus gives of the site on which Jerusalem was built is explicit and easily understood. It was placed on two hills (B. J. v. 4) opposite each other, with a valley between. The hill of the Upper City was the highest and largest; the second, that of Acra, was lower; a third hill, lower still, was to the east, separated by another valley, which was filled up by the Asmoneans. The first valley—the Tyropœon, which divided the Upper and Lower City—ran down to Siloam. Other deep valleys with precipices existed beyond the city on all sides, except on the north where three successive lines of fortification protected the town.

Turning to the plan of the rock beneath modern

ANCIENT JERUSALEM.

SHOWING THE ROCK SITE.



Claude R Conder Lt R E
15.9.77

N.B. The dots (·) shew points where the rock has been measured

Jerusalem, which is given in illustration, we see just such a site before us. On the south is a large and high hill, the top 2540 feet above the sea, with a deep valley to the south and west, and a second valley, almost equal in size, to the north and east. Down the last-mentioned valley David Street now runs, but the accumulation of rubbish is in parts forty feet deep. By the observations taken in making excavations in the old Hospital of the Knights of St. John, and in a vault farther east, as well as at the foundations of the Bishops' Palace and of the hotel near David's Tower, we ascertain the following details: that the valley, breaking down suddenly eastward, has its head at a narrow saddle at a level about 2500 feet above the sea, and that this saddle separates the head of the eastern valley from that of Wâdy Rabâbeh, which runs to the west of the Jaffa Gate: the eastern valley proves to have a depth of more than 100 feet below the summit of the southern hill. Other observations, farther east, show that the precipice visible just opposite the great bridge from the S.W. corner of the Haram runs north and turns westward, where either a vertical scarp, or a very steep slope, forms the N.E. angle of the southern hill above the corner where the great valley sweeps round southwards descending towards Siloam.

The plan further shows that the ground rises again north of the valley, and forms a small knoll

in the neighbourhood of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, with a second valley head to the east. This knoll is actually fifty feet lower than the top of the southern hill, and, from the lie of the ground, it appears to be still lower than it really is. The second valley on the east of the knoll separates off a third hill now occupied by the Mohammedan quarter of Jerusalem, and this is divided from the Temple Hill, of which it is really a part, by the rock-cut trench forty feet deep, hewn on the north side of the scarp which I have endeavoured to show was the Castle of Antonia. The third hill is lower again by fifty feet than the knoll last mentioned.

I do not see how we can hesitate in applying to this "rock site" the names given by Josephus. The southern, higher, and larger hill must be the Upper City, the "Mountain Fort" of Zion; the knoll north of it is Acra (which is identified by the Septuagint Version with Millo), the site of the Lower City; the broad valley between is the Tyropœon; the second valley is the Asmonean; the third hill is Bezetha, north of the Temple. The existence of the narrow saddle at the head of the valley, as will shortly appear, is an important indication. The fact is proved by no less than ten distinct observations, made in sinking the foundations of three large buildings, and the rock is here found to be slightly higher than the top of the Acra knoll.

The conformation of ground in Jerusalem is not radically different, even now, from that existing before the rubbish accumulated. David Street is indeed forty feet above the bed of the Tyropœon, but it still is reached from the southern hill by a steeply sloping street with steps. The ground falls away east of the Acra knoll to the Asmonean Valley on somewhat the same line which the rock beneath it follows, and it again rises into the third hill on the north-east. Thus any observer from the roofs will see in modern Jerusalem a very fair reproduction of the ancient city beneath; the main features are the same, but the differences of level, in the hills and valleys, are less marked.

Such being the rock site, Josephus's description of the walls is easily followed. The first wall embraced only the Upper City, and in its north-west corner were the Royal Towers, which formed the fortress of that part of the town. The north line of the wall is that most important to define, and it can scarcely be doubted that a line from David's Tower (where Hippicus and its two companions are placed in almost every plan) towards the Haram will represent the First Wall. Remains of towers have been found along this line, and, as above noticed, it is the line of the northern crest of the hill of the Upper City. As to this there is but little dispute between various authorities, nor is there any radical difference of opinion as

to the line on the south and west sides of the Upper City. The valuable excavations made in 1874 by Mr. Maudslay have thoroughly opened up the great scarp which formed the S.W. corner of ancient Jerusalem. Captain Warren's adventurous shafts have shown where the great wall joined the Temple. The line between these points might be traced without much difficulty, by simply following out the work already done.

From the first wall the second had its start, and here the difficulty arises, and here also the real value of the rock-levels is most noticeable. Can the wall be drawn to exclude the traditional Calvary, or must it of necessity include that spot? The answer, I think, may be given without hesitation, and the present site of the Holy Sepulchre will probably be discarded by any unprejudiced inquirer, if the following facts are taken into consideration.

The description of Josephus is tantalising from its brevity; but one word seems wanting—a word which must be supplied by the rocks themselves.

"The second wall took its beginning from the Gate Gennath, which belonged to the first wall. It encircled the north quarter of the city, and reached as far as the Tower Antonia" (B. J. v. 4, 2).

The word rendered "encircled" cannot well be construed with any other meaning. The wall had no angles, as had the first and third, it there-

fore required no lengthy description. The second wall started from the first wall, and running in a curve enclosed the Lower City, and terminated at the N.W. corner of the Temple.

The one statement wanted is that which should fix the Gennath (or Garden) Gate, which, as is generally admitted, was somewhere in the north face of the wall of the Upper City.

Now, as we have seen above, a great valley separates the Upper City from Acra, and a second valley runs southwards on the west side of the upper hill. No military man will suppose for a moment that the wall of a fortress could have been constructed in a deep valley and commanded from without by high ground immediately near. The wall must have stood *on the high ground*, and must have included one valley and excluded the other. Thus we are confined to a very narrow limit—to that saddle of rock at the head of the Tyropœon, which connects the great peninsula of the Upper City with the Acra knoll, for this little saddle is the only place where the rampart could protect the lower ground east of it, and command the valley to the west.

Here, therefore, hidden by the palace of the Protestant Bishop, still perhaps exists the foundation or the rock scarp, in which was the Gennath Gate; and from this isthmus of high land the second wall circled round to Antonia. The sudden deepening and the great breadth of the Tyropœon

appear to me to render it impossible to draw the line farther east.

If we accept this new indication, the wall can hardly be drawn otherwise than to include the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; for the knoll on which that building stands is, as contended above, the knoll of Acra—the Lower City included by the wall; and if this knoll be excluded, the same military objection will again arise—the "encircling" wall would be commanded by a hill immediately outside it.

The line of argument thus followed is, I believe, a new one, though the result is old. The observation of the rock-levels is a matter of primary importance, and the special observations on which the argument has been based have never before been published. The military consideration seems to me to set the matter at rest; and, to state the idea in a nutshell—"fortresses stand on hills, not in deep ravines."

The course of the third wall is a matter which has no bearing on the question of the site of Calvary; but it may be noted that the line laid down on the plan is controlled by three considerations. First, the necessity of placing the great corner tower, Psephinus, on very high ground, the position indicated being the very top of the watershed; second, the distance from the Women's Towers to the Tomb of Helena, which was three furlongs according to Josephus;

third, the line passing through the "Caverns of the Kings," as described by the same author, and extending to the Tower of the Corner. This question of the course of the Third Wall is, however, separate, and cannot be further pursued at present.

It seems to me that the study of the rock drives us irresistibly to the conclusions given above, and thus forbids us to accept the traditional site of the Sepulchre as genuine.

Will any reader who holds in veneration so sacred a spot feel disappointed at such a result? In the last chapter I endeavoured to give a faithful account of the yearly Pandemonium which disgraces the ancient walls, and of scenes which lower the Christian faith in the eyes of the Moslem. Surely none who read those pages could still wish to believe that the place thus annually desecrated is the Tomb of Christ.

The question which naturally next demands attention is that of the real site of Calvary; but the Gospel gives us no indication sufficient to settle the matter, though the words in the Epistle are enough to condemn the miraculously-discovered fourth-century site.

There is a fact bearing on this question which has never been published. It was mentioned to me by Dr. Chaplin, and by his consent I now make use of it.

The place called Calvary was, according to our general idea, the public place of execution. Some

have supposed its name—Golgotha, or "place of the skull"—to be derived from this fact; though others, including many of the early fathers, suppose it to refer to the shape of the ground—a rounded hill, in form like a skull. We look naturally for some spot just outside the city, and beside one of the great roads.

We have yet another indication—namely, that Calvary should be near the cemetery in which was the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, in the garden beyond the city. Now the great cemetery of Jewish times lies north of Jerusalem, on either side of the main north road; here we have the sepulchre of Simon the Just, preserved by Jewish tradition; here is the magnificent monument of Helena, Queen of Adiabene, fitted with a rolling-stone, such as closed the mouth of the Holy Sepulchre. The first of these tombs dates from three centuries before Christ; the second was cut in the first century of His era. Thus the northern cemetery was probably that which was in use in His time.

The Holy Sepulchre cannot have been one of the *kokim* tombs originally used by the Jews, in which each body lay in a long pigeon-hole, with its feet towards the central chamber; for in that case angels could not have been seated "one at the head and the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain." It must have been one of the later kind of tombs, in which the body lay in a rock sarcophagus under a rock arch parallel

with the side of the chamber. This is the kind of tomb which throughout Palestine we find closed by a rolling-stone; it is the kind in use in the late Jewish times, and the kind, moreover, which is found north of Jerusalem. Here, then, among the olive-gardens and vineyards of Wâdy el Jôz, one would naturally look for the site of the new tomb in the garden, far beyond the Acra hill, and in the cemetery which was used by the Jews at the time of Christ.

These considerations would lead us to fix Calvary—the place of execution, north of Jerusalem, near the main road to Shechem, and near the northern cemetery. Now, close to this road, on the east, is a rounded knoll, with a precipice on the south side, containing a cave known to Christians as Jeremiah's Grotto. The knoll is called by the natives El Heidhemîyeh ("the rent"), being severed from the Bezetha Hill by a deep trench. The Arabic word is, however, known to be a corruption of El Heiremîyeh, "the place of Jeremiah."

A venerable tradition has fixed on this neighbourhood as the scene of the martyrdom of St. Stephen. A church dedicated to him stood, in the twelfth century, near the knoll. There can be little doubt that the stoning of Stephen occurred at the place of public execution, and if we are right in supposing that place to be Calvary, then we have traditional reason for identifying the latter

with the neighbourhood of the Heidhemîyeh knoll.

But a stronger confirmation remains to be noticed. I have before shown how valuable is tradition, when, by common consent, Jew and Christian point to the same spot. In this case also the Jewish tradition agrees with that above mentioned. Dr. Chaplin tells me that the Jews still point out the knoll by the name Beth has Sekilah, "the Place of Stoning" (Domus lapidationis), and state it to be the ancient place of public execution which is mentioned in the Mishnah, and which was apparently well known at the time at which the tract Sanhedrim was written. Thus to "a green hill far away, beside a city wall," we turn from the artificial rocks and marble slabs of the monkish Chapel of Calvary.

I wish I could bring before the reader's mind as vividly as it now rises in my memory, the appearance of this most interesting spot. The stony road comes out from the beautiful Damascus Gate, and runs beside the yellow cliff, in which are excavated caverns, perhaps once part of the great Cotton Grotto. Above the cliff, which is some thirty feet high, is the rounded knoll without any building on it, bare of trees, and in spring covered in part with scanty grass, while a great portion is occupied by a Moslem cemetery. To the north are olive-groves, to the west, beneath the knoll, is a garden, in which the remains of the Crusading

Asnerie, or Hospice of the Templars, were found in 1875. From the knoll a view of the city, backed by the Moab hills, is obtained, and of the long white chalky ridge of Olivet dotted with olives. The place is bare and dusty, surrounded by stony ground and by heaps of rubbish, and exposed to the full glare of the summer sun. Such is the barren hillock which, by consent of Jewish and Christian tradition, is identified with the Place of Stoning, or of execution according to Jewish law.

I have but a word in conclusion to add in support of these views. Immutability is the most striking law of Eastern life. The Bible becomes a living record to those who have heard in men's mouths the very phrases of the Bible characters. The name of every village almost is Hebrew, each stands on the great dust-heap into which the ancient buildings beneath its present cabins have crumbled, and the old necropolis is cut in rock, near the modern site. For thousands of years the people have gone on living in the same way and in the same place, venerating (perhaps in ignorance) the same shrines, building their fortresses on the same vantage-ground.

This is also the case in Jerusalem. The great barracks of Antonia are still barracks. The fortress of the Upper City is still a fortress. On the rock-scarp of the "Tower of the Corner," a corner tower now stands. On the high ground,

where the stronghold of Psephinus once stood, the Russians have erected buildings which are regarded by many as a menace to the city. The Upper Market is a market, the Lower Market (mentioned with the former in the Talmud) is the main bazaar of Jerusalem. The old Iron Gate retains its name in the present Bâb el Hadîd. The Temple Area is still a sanctuary; finally, the Rock of Foundation is still covered by a sacred building, and the "Place of the Skull" is now a cemetery, while close to it is the slaughter-house of the city.

Knowing the immutability of sites in Palestine, we cannot, I would urge, consider these facts to be mere coincidences; they are rather strong confirmations of the accuracy of the more generally accepted views regarding the topography and monuments of ancient Jerusalem.

NOTE.—With regard to the levels given in the city, it may be noted that I myself took those in the Hospital (or Muristan) in 1873 with a tape, the rock being visible for a distance of over 100 feet. Those in the vault farther east, and at the foundations of the Bishop's Palace, and of the Hotel, were taken by Mr. Schick, and the results agree entirely with the contours which I had already drawn before some of these levels were obtained.

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